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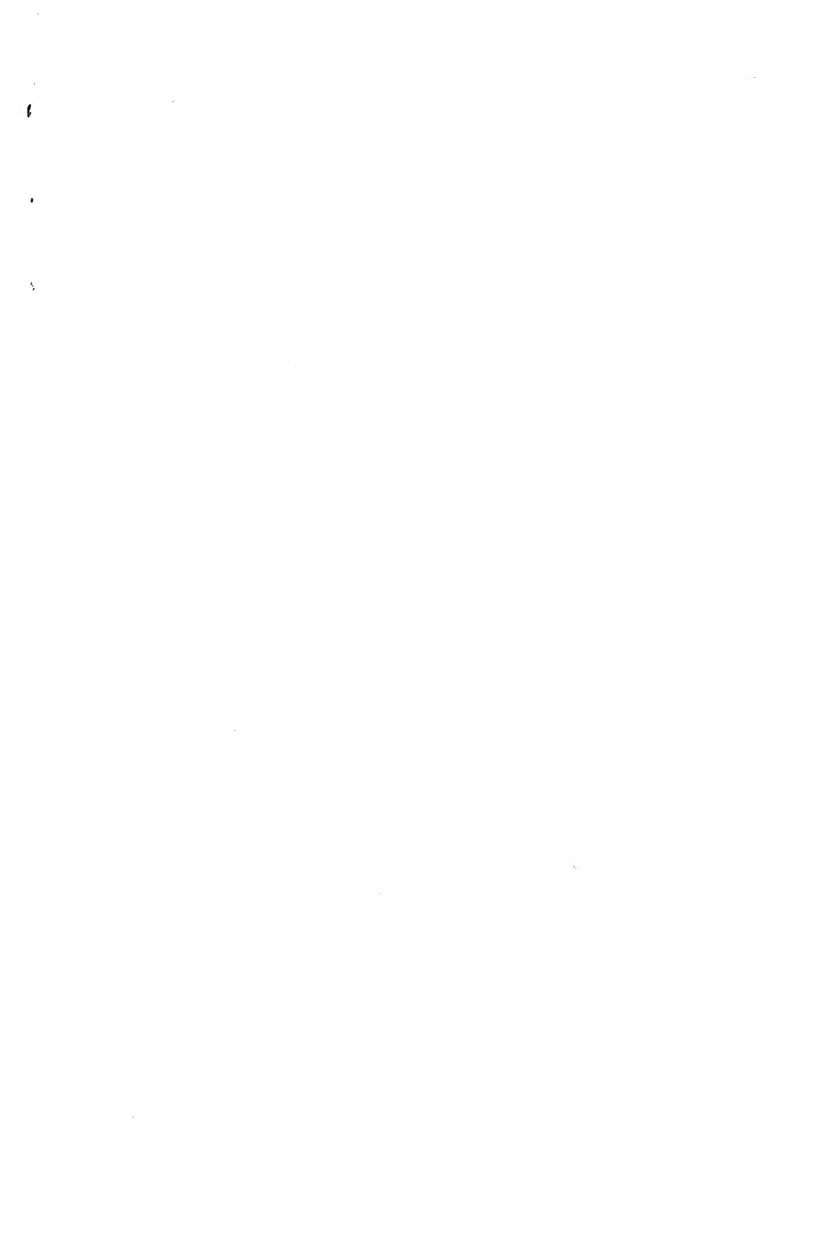

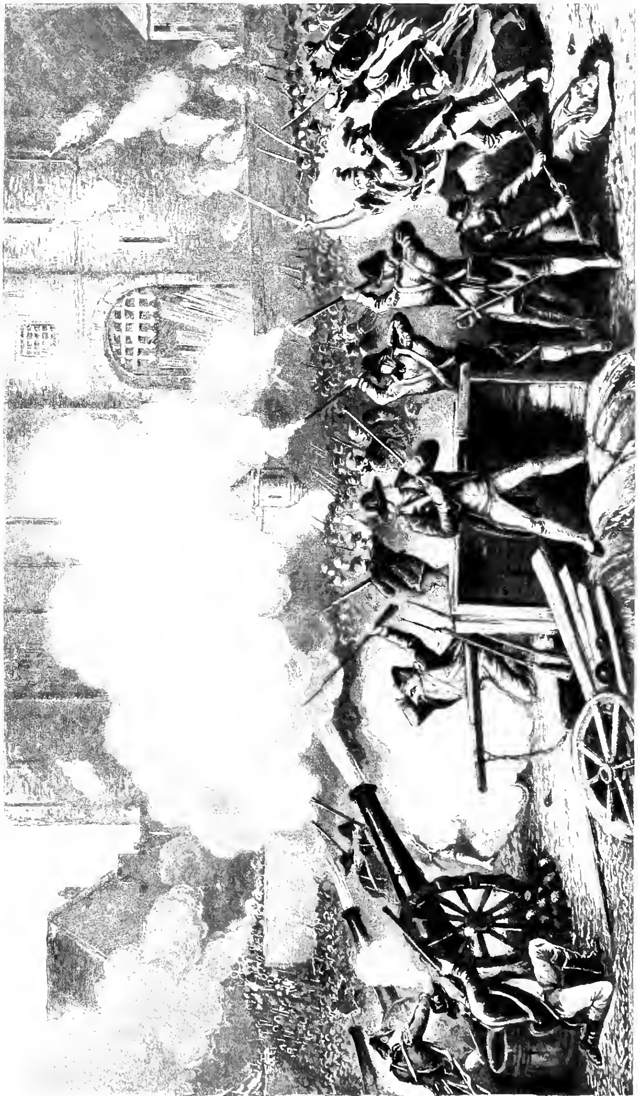

THE

HISTORY OF THE BASTILE

AND OF ITS

PRINCIPAL CAPTIVES.

By R. A. DAVENPORT.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A Short History of the State Prisoner, commonly called

"THE IRON MASK."

Illustrated.

LONDON:
WILLIAM TEGG & CO. PANCRAS LANE, CHEAPSIDE.
1876.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE execution of a plan so frequently falls immeasurably short of the author's original conception, that some wit, of whom I have forgotten the name, has likened them to the cry of an Oriental fruit-hawker: "In the name of the Prophet—figs!" I can bear witness how much what is purposed goes beyond what is accomplished. I began loftily, and perhaps the reader will say, that I have ended with—figs. At the outset I designed to link, in some measure, the history of the Bastile with that of France, and to trace the rise and progress of those parties, factions, and sects, which furnished inmates to the prisons of state. But I soon discovered that the contracted limits of a single volume would not admit of my plan being carried into execution. By much enlarging the page, and by making, at no small cost, a very considerable addition to the number of pages, the publisher has liberally endeavoured to give me the means of rendering the work less imperfect than it would otherwise have been; but I have, nevertheless, been exceedingly cramped by the want of adequate space.

But, though I have not done all that I wished to do, I am by no means disposed to disparage my labours. I have consulted every document that was accessible, and have conscientiously tried to be strictly just, and to combine information with amusement. I indulge a hope that the volume will tend not only to keep up an abhorrence of arbitrary power, but also to inspire affection for governments which hold it to be a duty to promote the happiness of the people. Whatever may be its defects, it is the only work in the English language that has even the slightest pretension to be denominated a History of the Bastile.

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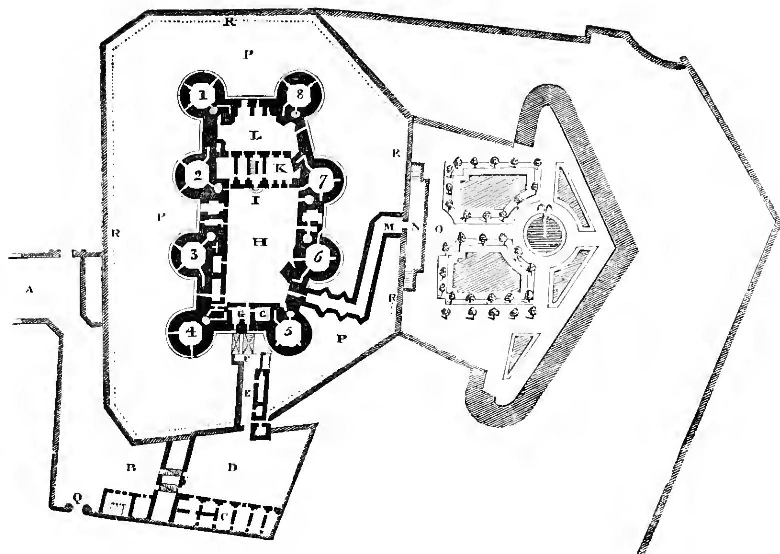

PLAN OF BASTILE.

A. Avenue from St. Anthony Street.
B. Entrance and first Drawbridge.
C. The Governor's House.
D. First Court.
E. Avenue leading to Gate of Fortress.
F. Drawbridge and Gate of Fortress.
G. Guardhouses.
H. The Great Court within the Towers.
I. Staircase leading to Council Chamber.
K. Council Chamber.
L. Court du Puits, or Well Court.
M. Way to the Garden.
N. Steps leading into Garden.
O. Garden.
P. Moat of the Fortress.
Q. Passage to Arsenal Garden.
R. Wooden Road round the Walls for the Night Patrol.
1. Tower du Puits.
2. Tower de la Liberté.
3. Tower de la Bertaudière.
4. Tower de la Bazinière.
5. Tower de la Comté.
6. Tower du Trésor.
7. Tower de la Chapelle.
8. Tower du Coin.

THE HISTORY
OF
THE BASTILE.

CHAPTER I.

Original meaning of the word Bastile.—Various Bastiles.—Description of "The Bastile."—Officers of the Fortress.—Interior of it.—The Garden.—The Court where the prisoners took exercise.—The Towers, Dungeons, Apartments, Furniture, Food, of the prisoners.—The Library.—The Chapel.—Lettres de Cachet described.—Advocate of them.—Change in the treatment of prisoners.—Narrative of a prisoner.—Strict search of prisoners.—Harshness to them.—Artifices employed against them.—Silence enjoined to the Guards, &c., of the prison.—Mode of receiving visitors.—Suppression of letters.—Secrecy and mystery.—Medical attendance.—Wills.—Insanity.—Clandestine burial of the dead.

The word Bastile, which has now long been, and will ever remain, a term of opprobrious import, to designate the dungeons of arbitrary power, has, like many other words, deviated widely in the lapse of years from its original meaning. Its derivation is traced, somewhat doubtfully, to the Italian *bastia* or *bastione*. In former times, it was applied to any fort, whether permanent or temporary. In our old writers, as well as in those of France, we find it repeatedly given to field works. The redoubts, for instance, by means of which, in the reign of the Sixth Henry, the English blockaded Orleans, are so denominated by French chroniclers. The same is the case with respect to more durable works; there were, at an early period, no less than three bastiles at Paris, those

of St. Denis, the Temple, and St. Anthony, all of which were situated to the north of the Seine. Eventually, the name was confined to the last of these buildings. The quadrangular castle of St. Denis was demolished in 1671; but the tower of the Temple, in which the unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth and his family were confined, outlasted the Bastile itself for nearly a quarter of a century, and was used as a state prison till 1811, when it ceased to exist.

The Bastile of St. Anthony—which structure I shall henceforth mention only as the Bastile—is generally supposed to have been founded by Hugh Aubriot. This opinion is, however, erroneous. It is beyond a doubt, that the original plan and construction of it must be assigned to the celebrated Stephen Marcel, provost of the merchants of Paris. When, in 1356, after the disastrous battle of Poitiers, the English detachments were ravaging the vicinity of the French capital, and the citizens were filled with terror, Stephen undertook to repair the dilapidated bulwarks of the city, and add other defences. Among his additions was a gate, fortified with towers on each side, leading from the suburb of St. Anthony into the street of the same name. These towers must be considered as the first rudiments of the Bastile.

The haste with which, while an enemy was at hand, the walls had been constructed, had not allowed of giving to them that height and solidity which were requisite for effectually resisting an attack. In 1369, Charles the Fifth resolved to remedy this defect. The task of making the necessary improvements was committed to Hugh Aubriot, the provost of Paris. Among the changes which Aubriot made, was the adding of two towers to those which already existed at St. Anthony's gate. They were erected

parallel with those built by Marcel; so that the whole formed a square fort, with towers at the angles. In the reign of Charles the Sixth, after the Maillotin insurrection, in 1382, the Bastile was again enlarged, by the addition of two towers at each end of the fortress; thus presenting a front of four towers to the city, and as many to the suburb. To render more difficult any attempt to surprise the place, the road, which, as we have seen, ran through it, was turned to one side. The body of the fortress received no further accession; but, before the middle of the seventeenth century, a bastion was constructed on the side toward the suburb, and a broad dry ditch, about forty yards wide, and twelve deep, faced with masonry, encircled the whole.

Along the summit of the exterior wall of the ditch, which was at an elevation of sixty feet above the bottom of the ditch, was a wooden gallery, called the Rounds, reached by two flights of steps. Day and night sentinels were constantly moving about in this gallery; every quarter of an hour they were visited by some of the officers or serjeants; and, more completely to secure their vigilance, each man had certain numbered pieces of copper pierced with holes, which, at stated times, he was to drop on the point of an instrument fixed in a padlocked box. A bell was also rung upon the Rounds, every quarter of an honr, throughout the night.

The officers on the establishment of the Bastile consisted of a governor, the king's lieutenant, a major, who officiated as secretary, and prepared the reports and monthly accounts for the minister, two adjutants to assist him, a physician, a surgeon and his assistant, a chaplain, two priests, and a confessor, a keeper of the records, clerk, superintendent of the buildings, engineer, four turnkeys,

and a company of invalids. No soldier was allowed to sleep out of the place without leave from the governor; nor could any officer dine out or be absent all night, without permission from the minister. Originally only the governor and the king's lieutenant were appointed by the king, the rest being nominated by the governor; and guard was mounted at the castle by a body of citizens, which bore the name of the Independent Company of Archers. The change was made about the middle of the eighteenth century.

The interior of the gloomy fabric must now be described. Having passed down St. Anthony's street, and arrived nearly at the city gate, leading to the suburb of the same name, he who wished or was compelled to visit the Bastile, turned to the right hand, in the direction of the Arsenal, where stood a sentinel, to warn off all idle gazers. Before, however, the main building could be entered, the visitor had to pursue his way along an approach, bent nearly into the form of three sides of a square, ⊐, flanked with buildings of various kinds, on the whole of one side, and a part of the other. Over the entrance-gate was an armoury, and on the right of it a guard-room; on the left hand was a range of suttling-houses, and on the right were barracks. The road then made an abrupt turn, on the right of which were stables, coach-houses, and a door, into a space which was called the Elm Court. This first division was named the Passage Court. At the extremity of it was a drawbridge, with a guard-house at its further end. This bridge led to a second court, taking its name from the governor's house, which, with his garden, occupied one-half of its circuit. Another abrupt turn brought the visitor opposite the portal of the fortress, which he at length reached, after having

passed by the kitchens, and traversed the great drawbridge. Between the street and the interior of the fortress there were five massy gates, at all of which sentinels were posted.

The principal drawbridge being passed, and the gate opened, the visitor stood within the Bastile itself. Leaving on his right a guard-room, he found himself in the Great Court of the Castle, a parallelogram of about a hundred and two feet long by seventy-two broad, containing six towers, three on the side looking towards the suburb, and as many on the city side; the former were named de la Comté, du Trésor, and de la Chapelle; the latter de la Bazanière, de la Bertaudière, and de la Liberté. Between the three left-hand towers were rooms for the archives and other purposes, and the chapel; between the towers du Trésor and de la Chapelle was, in former times, the gate of St. Anthony, and the road into the city.

A pile of buildings, comparatively modern, extending across the shortest diameter of the fortress, from the Tour de la Chapelle to the miscalled Tour de la Liberté, divided this principal court from another, called the Well Court. This pile contained the council chamber, the library, the repository for the prisoners' effects, and apartments for the king's lieutenant, the major, and other officers, and, occasionally, for the sick, and captives of distinction.

The length of the Well Court was between seventy and eighty feet, the breadth between forty and fifty. At the angle on the right was the tower du Coin, on the left the tower du Puit. In this court were some lodgings for the drudges of the place; and, as the poultry were fed and the offal was thrown out here, it was always dirty and unwholesome.

The garden, formed out of what once was a bastion,

on the suburb side of the castle, was laid out in walks, and planted with trees. It appears, that, till a period not long previous to the downfall of the Bastile, such prisoners as were not confined for flagitious crimes, or for the express purpose of being rendered supremely wretched, were permitted to walk there. To the last governor, M. de Launay, they were indebted for being deprived of this privilege. To increase his already enormous emoluments, he let it to a gardener, and he had interest enough with the minister to obtain his sanction for this encroachment on the scanty comforts of the prisoners—an order was issued by which they were excluded from it. Nor was this all, or the worst. The platforms, along the summit of the towers, and connecting curtains, had hitherto afforded a pleasant and airy walk; but these, too, were shut up, at his desire, partly to save trouble to those who watched the prisoners, and partly to diminish the chance of conversation between the former and the latter. Such conduct is, however, not strange in the man who could meet the complaints of his oppressed inmates with obscenely vulgar language; and could add, that "people either ought not to put themselves in the way of being sent to the Bastile, or ought to know how to suffer when they got there." Humanity deplores his subsequent fate, and execrates the brutality of his murderers; but, as far as regards him personally, M. de Launay appears to have been deserving of very little respect.

The only remaining spot in which exercise could be taken was the principal court. "The walls which enclose it," says M. Linguet, "are more than a hundred feet high, without windows; so that, in fact, it is a large well, where the cold is unbearable in winter, because the north-east wind pours into it, and in summer the heat is

no less so, because, there being no circulation of air, the sun makes an absolute oven of it. This is the sole lyceum where such of the prisoners as have permission (for all do not have it) can, each in his turn, for a few moments in the day, disencumber their lungs from the pestilential air of their dwelling." But even this poor gratification, which seldom extended to an hour, was considerably abridged by circumstances. Any increase in the number of prisoners diminished the time which was allotted. Whenever, as was frequently the case, any stranger entered the court, the prisoner was obliged to hurry into a narrow passage, called the Cabinet, and shut himself in closely, that he might not be seen. M. Linguet states, that three quarters of an hour was often wasted in these compulsory retreats to the Cabinet. If they were not promptly made, or the captive displayed any curiosity, the least penalty inflicted was confining the delinquent within the limits of his cell.

The towers, which were at least a hundred feet high, were seven feet thick at the top, and the thickness gradually increased down to the foundation. Lowest of all in them were dungeons, under the level of the soil, arched, paved, lined with stone, dripping with perpetual damps, the darkness of which was made visible by means of a narrow slit through the wall, on the side next the ditch. In this fœtid den, swarmed newts, toads, rats, and every variety of vermin which haunt confined and gloomy spots. Planks laid across iron bars fixed in the wall, formed the couch of the captive, and his only bedding, even in the most inclement season, was a little straw. Two doors, each seven inches thick, with enormous locks and bars, closed the entrance to each of these horrible abodes, over which might fitly have been inscribed the terrific line that

shone dimly over the gate of hell, "All hope abandon ye who enter here!"

Above the dungeons were four stories, each consisting of a single room, with, in some instances, a dark closet scooped out of the wall. All were shut in by ponderous double doors; as were also the staircases. In three of the stories, the rooms, of an irregular octagonal shape, were about twenty feet in diameter, and eighteen in height. In many of the rooms the ceilings were double, with a considerable vacuity between them; the lower one was of lath and plaster, the upper of solid oak. The highest story of all, which was termed la Calotte, was neither so lofty nor so large as the others; it was arched to support the roof and platform, and its curvature prevented its inhabitant from walking in any part but the middle of the room. On the towers and curtains several pieces of cannon were mounted.

The light which was thrown into these chambers was broken and imperfect; prospect from them there was none. Each room had only one window; and, independent of the obstacle opposed to sight by the massiveness of the walls, there was another, in the double iron gratings, at the outside and middle, formed of bars as thick as a man's arm, which closed the narrow aperture. In the lower stories, that there might be no chance of seeing or being seen, the opening was filled half way up with stone and mortar, or with planks fastened to the external grating. Three steps led up to some of the windows, if windows they may be called; in other cases they were level with the floor. A glass casement excluded the wind in the better apartments; the dungeons were left exposed to all the rigour of the elements.

The rooms were floored with tile or stone, and all of

them, except the dungeons, had chimneys or stoves; the chimneys were secured, in several parts, by iron bars. In winter, six pieces of wood were allowed daily for firing. M. Linguet complains in his Memoirs, that the quantity was insufficient, and the quality execrable. It is obvious that, to enhance his profits, an avaricious governor would purchase as cheaply, and deal out as scantily, as it was possible for him to do.

The rooms were designated from their situation in the towers, numbering from the bottom, and the prisoners were designated by the number of their room. Thus, for instance, the first chamber above the dungeon in the Bazinière tower was called the first Bazinière, and so on to the topmost, which was known as the Calotte Bazinière. The prisoner was consequently mentioned not by his name but by the number of his room—the first Bazinière, the first Bertaudière, the third Comté, etc. In some cases it appears that the prisoner received another name instead of his own, which was never uttered or written. In this way De la Tude, of whom we shall have occasion to speak, was denominated Daury.

In what manner these pleasant abodes were furnished M. Linguet shall describe. "Two worm-eaten mattresses, a cane elbow chair, the bottom of which was held together by packthread, a tottering table, a water jug, two pots of delftware, one of which was to drink out of, and two flag stones, to support the fire; such was the inventory, at least such was mine. I was indebted only to the commiseration of the turnkey, after several months' confinement, for a pair of tongs and fire-shovel. It was not possible for me to procure dog-irons; and whether it arises from policy or inhumanity I know not, what the governor will not supply, he will not allow a prisoner to

procure at his own expense. It was eight months ere I could obtain permission to buy a tea-pot, twelve before I could procure a tolerably strong chair, and fifteen ere I was suffered to replace by a crockery vessel the filthy and disgusting pewter vessel which is the only one that is used in the Bastile.

"The single article which I was at the outset allowed to purchase was a new blanket, and the occasion was as follows :

"The month of September, as every body knows, is the time when the moths that prey upon woollens are transformed into winged insects. When the *antre* which was assigned to me was opened, there arose from the bed, I will not say a number, nor a cloud, but a large and dense column of moths, which overspread the chamber in an instant. I started back with horror. 'Pooh! pooh!' said one of my conductors with a smile, 'before you have lain here two nights, there will not be one of them left.'

"In the evening, the lieutenant of police came, according to custom, to welcome me. I manifested so violent a repugnance to such a populous flock bed, that they were gracious enough to permit me to put on a new covering, and to have the mattress beaten, the whole at my own cost. As feather beds are prohibited articles in the Bastile, doubtless because such luxuries are not suitable for persons to whom the ministry wishes above all things to give lessons of mortification, I was very desirous that, every three months at least, my shabby mattress should have the same kind of renovation. But, though it would have cost him nothing, the proprietory governor opposed it with all his might, 'for,' said he, 'it wears them out."

Each prisoner was supplied with flint, steel, and tinder,

a candle a day, a broom once a week, and a pair of sheets every fortnight.

Captives of rank were undoubtedly somewhat better accommodated, and, where there were no particular reasons for annoying them, they were favoured by being allowed to receive articles from their homes; but the common run of convenience and comfort appears not to have gone beyond what is described by M. Linguet.

The food of the prisoners was paid for by the king at so much per head, according to a graduated scale; but the supply and management of it were left, seemingly without control, in the hands of the governor. By this arrangement the prisoners were placed at the mercy of the jailor, who, if he happened to have a great love of gain, and a scanty portion of humanity, might fill his purse by furnishing bad provisions, or not sufficient to sustain life. "There are prisoners in the Bastile," says Linguet, "who have not more than four ounces of meat at a meal; this has been ascertained more than once by weighing what was given to them; the fact is notorious to all the under officers, who are grieved by it." In estimating the amount of the wrong thus inflicted, it must be borne in mind, that the man who is in bonds requires more and better nourishment, to keep nature from sinking, than is necessary for the man who is a free agent. There was, in this instance, no excuse for stint. The sum allowed by the king for the maintenance of the captives was exceedingly liberal. It was nearly half-a-crown a day for an individual of the humblest class; four shillings for a tradesman; eight shillings for a priest, a person in the finance department, or an ordinary judge; twelve shillings for a parliament counsellor; twenty shillings for a lieutenant-general in the army; one pound ten for a marshal of France; and

two guineas for a prince of the blood. If the sovereign oppressed those who incurred his anger, he at least did not mean to starve them.

What was the fare which this high rate of remuneration obtained for the prisoners? It is thus described in a work published in 1774, by one who had himself long tried it. I am not aware that the accuracy of the statement has ever been impeached; on the contrary, there is the testimony of other witnesses to the same effect.

"The kitchen is supplied by the governor's steward, who has under him a cook, a scullion, and a man whose employment is to cut wood for fuel. All the victuals are bad, and generally ill-dressed; and this is a mine of gold to the governor, whose revenue is daily augumented by the hard fare of the prisoners under his keeping. Besides these profits, which are inconceivably great, the governor receives a hundred and fifty livres a day for fifteen prison rooms, at ten livres each, as a sort of gratification in addition to his salary; and he often derives other considerable emoluments.

"On flesh days the prisoners have soup with boiled meat, &c., for dinner; at night a slice of roast meat, a ragout and salad. The diet on fast days consists, at dinner, of fish, and two other dishes; at night, of eggs, with greens. The difference in the quality of the diet is very small between the lowest rank of prisoners, and those who are classed at five or ten livres; the table of the latter is furnished with perhaps half a starved chicken, a pigeon, a wild rabbit, or some small bird, with a dessert: the portion of each rarely exceeds the value of twopence.

"The *Sunday's* dinner consists of some bad soup, a slice of a cow, which they call beef, and four little pâtés; at night a slice of roast veal or mutton, or a little plate of

haricot, in which bare bones and turnips greatly predominate; to these are added a salad, the oil to which is always rancid. The suppers are pretty uniformly the same on flesh days. *Monday:* instead of four pâtés, a haricot. *Tuesday:* at noon, a sausage, half a pig's foot, or a small pork chop. *Wednesday:* a tart, generally either halfwarm or burnt up. *Thursday:* two very thin mutton chops. *Friday:* half a small carp, either fried or stewed, a stinking haddock or cod, with butter and mustard; to which are added greens or eggs; at supper, eggs, with spinach mixed up with milk and water.—*Saturday:* the same. And this perpetual rotation recommences on Sunday.

"On the three holidays, St. Louis, St. Martin, and Twelfth-day, every prisoner has an addition made to his allowance, of half a roasted chicken, or a pigeon. On Holy Monday, his dinner is accompanied by a tart extraordinary.

"Each prisoner has an allowance of a pound of bread and a bottle of wine per day; but the wine is generally flat and good for nothing. The dessert consists of an apple, a biscuit, a few almonds and raisins, some cherries, gooseberries, or plums; these are commonly served in pewter, though sometimes they are favoured with earthen dishes and a silver spoon and fork. If any one complains of receiving bad provisions, a partial amendment may take place for a few days; but the complainant is sure to meet with some unpleasant effects of resentment. There is no cook's shop in the kingdom, where you may not get a better dinner for a shilling than what are served in the Bastile. The cookery, in short, is wretchedly bad, the soup tasteless, and the meat of the worst quality, and ill-dressed. All this must operate to injure the health of the

prisoners; and, added to other grievances, excites frequent imprecations of vengeance from Heaven."

With respect to the badness of the wine, Linguet corroborates the statement of this writer. The governor, it appears, in addition to the diet-money, had the privilege of taking into his cellars near a hundred hogsheads of wine, duty free. "What does he do?" says Linguet. "He sells his privilege to a Parisian tavern-keeper, of the name of Joli, who gives him 250*l.* for it, and he takes in exchange from him the very cheapest kind of wine for the use of the prisoners; which wine, as may easily be imagined, is nothing but vinegar." This was a fraud at once upon the government and the prisoners.

The sole mental recreation which the prison afforded was derived from a small library, consisting of about five hundred volumes. This collection is said to have been founded by a foreign prisoner, who died in the Bastile, about the beginning of the eighteenth century, and to have been enlarged by later sufferers. In some cases, prisoners were allowed to read in the library; but, generally, the works were taken to the cells of the captives, and the selection of them depended on the taste of the turnkeys. Few of the books were unmutilated; for the prisoners now and then indulged in writing bitter remarks on the blank spaces. As soon as a book was returned, every leaf was carefully examined, and woe be to the rash offender who had suffered passion to get the better of prudence! An epigram, or a sarcasm, on his persecutors, or on men in office, exposed him to the worst that irresponsible power could inflict. As to the volume, if the writing was on the margin, the piece was cut off; but when it chanced to be inserted between the lines, the page was torn out.

It seems to have been thought by no means necessary that a prisoner, who was deprived of all earthly comforts, should receive consolation from regular attendance on religious worship. The chapel was a miserable hole, of about seven or eight feet square, under the pigeon-house of the king's lieutenant. "In this chapel," says one who had been a captive, "are five small niches or closets, with strong locks, of which three are formed in the wall; the others are only wainscot. Every prisoner admitted to hear mass is put in by himself,* and can neither see objects nor be seen of any. The doors of these niches are secured by two bolts on the outside, and lined within by iron bars; they are also glazed; but before each is hung a curtain, which is drawn back at the Sanctus, and again closed at the concluding prayer. Five prisoners only being admitted at each mass, it follows that no more than ten can assist at that ceremony in a day. If there be a greater number than this in the Castle, they either do not go at all, or go alternately; because there are generally found some who have a constant permission."

There was a confessor in the fortress; but it is scarcely possible that a prisoner could repose entire confidence in a spiritual director who was in the pay of his oppressors. Though it is going much too far to say, as M. Linguet does, that such a man is "a cowardly double-dealer, who prostitutes the dignity of his character," it must be owned that some doubts and suspicions as to him might naturally arise; it matters not that they would be unjust, the possibility of their being excited ought to have been carefully avoided.

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* M. Linguet says, that each of these niches was but just large enough for one person, and had neither light nor air except at the moment when the door was opened.

Let us now turn to the concise but terrible instrument by virtue of which an individual was consigned to captivity, perhaps for life. This was the *lettre de cachet*, or sealed letter, so called to distinguish it from the *patent* or open letter, which was merely folded. In former days, such epistles were called *lettres closes*, or *clauses*. The name was not given to all sealed-up-missives, but only to those which contained some command or information from the sovereign. They were signed by the king, and countersigned by one of the secretaries of state. The same appellation was originally given to all letters of the kind described; but in later times, it was principally if not wholly applied, at least in common parlance, to royal orders of exile and imprisonment.

The oldest recorded mandate of this species is that which Thierry the Second issued, at the instigation of Brunehaut, against St. Columbanus, who had severely censured the vices of the mother and the son. It directed that he should be removed from the monastery of Luxeuil, and banished to Besançon, where he was to remain during the king's pleasure. The saint yielded only to force, and, as soon as the guards were withdrawn, he retired to his convent. Violence, however, at length compelled him to quit the dominions of the licentious Thierry.

The *lettre de cachet* was usually carried into effect by the officers of police; sometimes the arrest was made at the dwelling of the individual, sometimes on the roads or in the street by night; but, in all cases, it appears to have been accomplished with as much secrecy as possible, so that it was no uncommon thing for persons to be missing for years, without their friends being able to discover what had become of them. Men of rank were at times spared the disgrace of being taken into custody; they

were favoured by being allowed to carry the letter themselves to the prison mentioned in it, and surrender to the governor. Here is a specimen of these obliging billets, which was addressed to the prince of Monaco, a brigadier in the French army.

"My Cousin,

"Being by no means satisfied with your conduct, I send you this letter, to apprise you that my intention is, that, as soon as you receive it, you shall proceed to my castle of the Bastile, there to remain till you have my further orders. On which, my cousin, I pray God to have you in his holy keeping. Given at Versailles, this 25th of June, 1748. *(Signed)* "LOUIS."

(Countersigned) "VOYER D'ARGENSON."

By such a scrap of paper as this might any man in France be doomed to close and hopeless imprisonment. Malice, wounded pride, rivalry, revenge, all the base and cruel passions, availed themselves of it to torment their enemies. The titled harlot, whose shame had excited laughter or reprobation, the minister, whose measures were unpopular, the frivolous courtier whose folly had been satirised, the debauchee, who wished to remove an obstacle to his lust, the parent, who preferred ruling his offspring rather by fear than love, was eager to obtain one of these convenient scorpion scourges, and the wish was too often gratified.

There is scarcely any enormity so monstrous that it cannot find a defender. Even *lettres de cachet* have not been without an apologist; and to make the wonder the greater, an English apologist. Let us listen to his plea. "Perhaps (says he) it was the abuse of the *lettres de cachet*, rather than their institution, that

merited the execration in which they were held; for however extraordinary it may seem, they were not unfrequently used to serve the purposes of humanity. There are many instances of persons who, on account of private disputes, or affairs of state, would have been exposed to public punishment, that were shut up by a *lettre de cachet*, until the danger was past, or the matter accommodated or forgotten. It may undoubtedly be objected, that keeping a person from justice is itself a crime against the public; but in forming a judgment upon this subject, we ought to take into consideration the prejudices entertained in the country where this authority was employed. It should be remembered that, by an old and barbarous practice, the disgrace attending a capital punishment, inflicted by the laws, was reflected upon all the family of the criminal; and that in many instances it required a public act of the supreme power to wipe off the stain, and again enable them to serve their country. In as far, therefore, as the *lettres de cachet* counteracted the effects of these prejudices, they were useful; *but though they were signed by the king, from the idea that it was proper to have them ready for cases of emergency, ministers, and governors of provinces, etc., were generally furnished with them in blank, to be filled up at their discretions; and the friends and favourites of those ministers sometimes obtained them from them, as is proved by the case of M. de Fratteaux, and in many other instances.*"*

This is, indeed, carrying to a ridiculous extent the determination to find "a soul of good in things evil!" Perhaps it would not be uncharitable to put a harsher

* M. de Fratteaux was seized in England, and carried off by the French officers of police. "His misfortunes seem to have been owing to an unnatural father, who being on terms of intimacy with the minister, obtained a *lettre de cachet* to arrest and confine his son."

construction on such language. Public justice is to be defrauded, thousands are to be plunged into misery, personal safety is to be hourly jeoparded, crime, committed by the rich and powerful is to escape with all but complete impunity, and the motives which most influence individuals to bridle their unruly passions are to be weakened, merely "to counteract the effects of a prejudice" on a few ancient families! Never was an infinitely small benefit bought at a more extravagant price.

From certain particulars, which we find in various memoirs, it would seem that, generally speaking, more indulgences were granted to the inmates of the Bastile in former days, than during the last thirty years of its existence. At all times, however, much would undoubtedly depend on the personal character of the governor; if he chanced to be liberal-minded and humane, he would, as far as he could venture to do so, mitigate the sufferings of his captives; if, on the contrary, he were greedy of gain, and harsh in his disposition, he would stint and deteriorate their diet, wantonly deny them even the most trifling comforts, and, in short, do his best to make the management of the prison "render life a burden," which, with an impudent candour, one of the officers of the castle avowed to be its especial purpose.

It must be owned that, in some respects, modern times witnessed an improvement in the practice of the Bastile. The cages which it is known once to have contained, were removed. The rack, also, and other instruments of torture, ceased to be called into use. At what period the change took place is not said. That in the latter end of Louis the Thirteenth's reign, the instruments still existed in the castle, we learn from the Memoirs of the faithful La Porte, who saw them, and was threatened with them to extort a confession.

What the Bastile was in its mildest form will appear from the following narrative, written by a person who was confined for eight months. "About five in the morning of the 2nd of April, 1771," says the narrator, "I was awakened by a violent knocking at my chamber door, and was commanded, in the name of the king, to open it. I did so, and an exempt of the police, three men who appeared to be under his orders, and a commissary, entered the room. They desired me to dress myself, and began to search the apartment. They ordered me to open my drawers, and having examined my papers, they took such as they chose, and put them into a box, which, as I understood afterwards, was carried to the police-office. The commissary asked me my name, my age, the place where I was born, how long I had been at Paris, and the manner in which I spent my time. The examination was written down by him; a list was made of everything found in the room, which, together with the examination, I was desired to read and sign. The exempt then told me to take all my body linen, and such clothes as I chose, and to come along with them. At the word *all* I started; I guessed where they were about to take me, and it seemed to announce to me a long train of misery.

"Having shut and sealed the drawers, they desired me to follow them; and in going out, they locked the chamber door and took the key. On coming to the street, I found a coach, into which I was desired to go, and the others followed me. After sitting for some time, the commissary told me they were carrying me to the Bastile, and soon afterwards I saw the towers. They did not go the shortest and direct road, which I suppose was to conceal our destination from those who might have observed us. The coach stopped at the gate in St. Anthony's street. I saw

the coachman make signs to the sentinel, and soon after the gate was opened: the guard was under arms, and I heard the gate shut again. On coming to the first draw-bridge, it was let down, the guard there being likewise under arms. The coach went on and entered the castle, where I saw another guard under arms. It stopped at a flight of steps, at the bottom of the court, where, being desired to go out, I was conducted to a room which I heard named the council chamber. I found three persons sitting at a table, who, as I was told, were the king's lieutenant, the major, and his deputy. The major asked me nearly the same questions which the commissary had done, and observed the same formalities in directing me to read and sign the examination. I was then desired to empty my pockets and lay what I had in them on the table. My handkerchief and snuff-box being returned to me, my money, watch, and indeed everything else, were put into a box that was sealed in my presence, and an inventory having been made of them, it was likewise read and signed by me. The major then called for the turnkey whose turn of duty it was, and having asked what room was empty, he said, the Calotte de la Bertaudière. He was ordered to convey me to it, and to carry thither my linen and clothes. The turnkey having done so, left me and locked the doors. The weather was still extremely cold, and I was glad to see him return soon afterwards with firewood, a tinder-box, and a candle. He made my fire; but told me, on leaving the tinder-box, that I might in future do it myself when so inclined.*

* Prisoners who were not allowed to have a servant of their own, sometimes were indulged with an invalid soldier to attend them; but those who had neither, made their bed, lighted their fire, and swept their room, themselves.

"From the time the exempt of police came into my room, I had not ceased to form conjectures about the cause of my imprisonment. I knew of none unless it were some verses and sketches relative to the affairs of the times. Though they were indiscreet, they were of little importance. The only writing that might have seriously given offence to the government I had never shown, but to one person in whom I thought I could confide. I found afterwards he had betrayed me.

"When I heard the double doors shut upon me a second time, casting my eyes round my habitation, I fancied I now saw the extent of all that was left to me in this world for the rest of my days. *Besides the malignity of enemies, and the anger of a minister, I felt that I ran the risk of being forgotten; the fate of many who had no one of influence to protect them, or who have not particularly attracted the notice of the public. Naturally fond of society, I confess I looked forward to the abyss of lonely wretchedness, that I thought awaited me, with a degree of horror that cannot easily be described. I even regretted now what I had formerly considered as the greatest blessing, a healthy constitution that had never been affected by disease.*

"I recollect with humble gratitude the first gleam of comfort that shot across this gloom. It was the idea, that neither massive walls, nor tremendous bolts, nor all the vigilance of suspicious keepers, could conceal me from the sight of God. This thought I fondly cherished, and it gave me infinite consolation in the course of my imprisonment, and principally contributed to enable me to support it, with a degree of fortitude and resignation that I have since wondered at—I no longer felt myself alone.

"At eleven, my reflections were interrupted by the turnkey, who entered with my dinner. Having spread

the table with a clean napkin, he placed the dishes on it, cut the meat, and retired, taking away the knife. The dishes, plates, fork, spoon, and goblet, were of pewter. The dinner consisted of soup and bouilli, a piece of roasted meat, a bottle of good table wine, and a pound loaf of the best kind of household bread. In the evening, at seven, he brought me my supper, which consisted of a roast dish and a ragout. The same ceremony was observed in cutting the meat to render the knife unnecessary to me. He took away the dishes he had brought for dinner, and returned at eight the next morning to take away the supper things. Fridays and Saturdays being fast or *maigre* days, the dinner consisted of soup, a dish of fish, and two dishes of vegetables; the suppers, of two dishes of garden stuff, and an omelet, or something made with eggs and milk. The dinners and suppers of each day in the week were different, but every week was the same: so that the ordinary class of prisoners saw in the course of the first week their bill of fare for fifty years, if they staid so long.

"I had remained in my room about three weeks, when I was one morning carried down to the council chamber, where I found the commissary. He began by asking most of the questions that had been put to me before. He then asked if I had any knowledge of some works he named, meaning those that had been written by me;—if I was acquainted with the author of them;—whether there were any persons concerned with him;—and if I knew whether they had been printed? I told him that, as I did not mean to conceal any thing, I should avoid giving him needless trouble; that I myself was the author of the works he had mentioned, and guessed I was there on that account;—that they never had been printed!—

that the work, which I conceived was the cause of my confinement, had never been shown to any but one person, whom I thought my friend; and having no accomplices, the offence if there was any, rested solely with myself. He said my examination was one of the shortest he had ever been employed at, for it ended here. I was carried back to my room, and the next day was shaved for the first time since my confinement.

"A few days afterwards I wrote to the lieutenant of the police, requesting to be indulged with the use of books, pen, ink, and paper, which was granted; but I was not allowed to go down to the library to choose the books. Several volumes were brought to me by the turnkey, who, when I desired it, carried them back and brought others.

"After my last examination I was taken down almost daily, and allowed to walk about an hour in the court within view of the sentinel: but my walks were frequently interrupted; for if any one appeared, the sentinel called out 'To the Cabinet!' and I was then obliged to conceal myself hastily in a kind of dark closet in the wall near the chapel.

"The sheets of my bed were changed once a fortnight, I was allowed four towels a week, and my linen was taken to be washed every Saturday. I had a tallow candle daily, and in the cold season a certain number of pieces of firewood. I was told that the allowance of fire to the prisoners began the 1st of November, and ceased on the 1st of April, and that my having a fire in April was a particular indulgence.

"After being detained above eight months, I was informed that an order had come to discharge me. I was desired to go down to the council chamber: every thing

I had brought with me was returned, together with the key of my apartment, which I found exactly in the state I left it on the morning of the 2nd of April, 1771.

"During my confinement I wrote many letters to several of my friends, which were always received with civility, but not one of them had been delivered."

The aspect of captivity in the Bastile, even when stripped of a part of its horrors, is surely hideous enough. But there can be no doubt that, in a multitude of cases, an enormous degree of severity was exercised. Instead of being told, as in this instance, to give up the contents of his pockets, the prisoner was rudely searched by four men, who amused themselves with making vulgar jokes and remarks while they were performing the task: sometimes his own garments were taken from him, and he was clothed in rags. His sufferings from imprisonment might also be frightfully aggravated, by thrusting him into one of the humid and pestilential dungeons, or into a room which was in the vicinity of a nuisance. M. Linguet was confined in a chamber which fronted the mouth of the common sewer of St. Anthony's street, so that the air which he breathed was never pure; but in hot weather, in the spring and autumnal floods, and whenever the sewer was cleaned, the mephitic vapours, which penetrated into his cell, and accumulated there for want of an outlet, were scarcely to be endured. What were the interior accommodations of this cell the reader has already seen.

The prisoner was not left to divine the motive for depriving him of all incisive and pointed instruments; he was bluntly informed that it was done to prevent him from cutting his own throat or the throats of his keepers. The reason assigned for the precaution shows sufficiently, that the officers of the Bastile rightly estimated the ca-

pability of exciting despair, which was possessed by their prison. This preventive system was carried to an almost ludicrous extent. Wishing to beguile the tedium of captivity M. Linguet resolved to resume his geometrical studies, and he accordingly requested to be supplied with a case of mathematical instruments. After much demur, the case was obtained, but it was without a pair of compasses. When he remonstrated respecting the omission, he was told, that "arms were prohibited in the Bastile." At length, his jailors hit upon the happy idea of having the compasses made of bone. Candour, however, requires the acknowledgment that their fears were not wholly groundless, instances having occurred in which prisoners were driven to desperation. It was with a pair of compasses that the unfortunate Count Lally endeavoured to put an end to his existence. His attempt was made in year 1766, and, in the following year, a more fatal event took place. A captive, Drohart by name, contrived to secrete a knife, with which he first mortally wounded a turnkey, and then destroyed himself.

For some time after his arrival at the Bastile, every thing seems to have been studiously contrived to shock a prisoner's habits, insulate him from the human race, and deliver him up to squalid wretchedness, and distracting thoughts. The manifest purpose of this was, to break his courage, and thereby induce him to make such confessions as would answer the ends of his persecutors. It was not till after he had undergone a second examination that he was allowed to be shaved; and months often elapsed before this favour was granted. Neither was he permitted to have books, pens, or paper, nor to attend mass, nor to walk in the court. He could not even write to the lieutenant of police, through whom alone any

indulgence was to be obtained. The sight of the turnkey, for a few moments, thrice a day, was the sole link which connected him with his fellow beings.

Every stratagem which cunning could devise was put in practice to entrap a prisoner into an avowal of guilt, the betraying of his suspected friends, or, failing these, into such contradictions as might give a colour for refusing to believe him innocent. Threats, too, were not spared, nor even flatteries and promises. At one moment, papers were shown to him, but not put into his hands, which his examiners affirmed to contain decisive proof of his criminality; at another, he was told that his accomplices had divulged the whole, and that his obstinate silence would subject him to be tried by a special commission, while, on the contrary, if he would speak out frankly he should be speedily liberated. He who was seduced by this artifice was sure to repent of his folly. When the irrevocable words had passed his lips, he was informed that the power of his deluders did not extend to setting him free, but that they would exert all their influence, and hoped to succeed. It is scarcely necessary to say, that there was not a syllable of truth in their assurances, and that he who had confided in them was treated with increased severity. It was not only in official examinations that the captive was exposed to be thus circumstanced; the same system was pursued throughout. There was no one who approached him to whom he could venture to breathe a whisper of complaint. If he was visited by the lieutenant of police, the sole aim of the lieutenant was to draw forth something which might be turned against him. If he was allowed to be attended by one of the invalids, the attendant treasured up for his masters every word that was dropped. Sometimes, apparently as a

matter of grace and kindness, a companion, said to be a fellow-sufferer, was given to him; the companion was a police spy, who was withdrawn when he had wormed out the secret, or had become convinced that it was unattainable. To listen to that which seemed the voice of pity was dangerous; for the turnkeys and other officers, enjoined though they were to be mute on other occassions, had their tongues let loose for fraudulent ends, and were taught to lure the prisoners into indiscreet language, by feigned expressions of sympathy.

In general, a silence was maintained by the officers and attendants, which might rival that of the monks of La Trappe. "When a corporal or any other (said the instructions), is ordered to attend a prisoner, who may have permission to walk in the garden, or on the towers, it is expressly forbidden that he speak to him. He is to observe his actions, to take care that he make no signs to any one without, and to bring him back at the hour fixed, delivering him over to an officer, or one of the turnkeys, as may have been ordered."—"The sentinel in the court must constantly keep in view the prisoners who may be permitted to walk there: he must be attentive to observe if they drop any paper, letter, note, or anything else: he must prevent them from writing on the walls, and render an exact account of every thing he may have remarked whilst on duty. All persons whatsoever, except the officers of the staff and turnkeys, are forbidden ever to speak to any prisoner, or even to answer him, under any pretence whatever." As it was supposed that strangers might chance to feel pity for the victims of despotism, and of course be disposed to express it, or to serve them, care was taken to guard against that evil. It was therefore ordered that, "if workmen should be employed in

the castle, as many sentinels must be put over them as may be thought necessary, who must observe them with the same attention as they do the prisoners, in order that they may not approach these, nor do anything that may be contrary to the rules of the place."

Visits from without seem never to have been permitted except in minor cases of offence. No permission was granted till after the final examination, and not then till repeated requests had been made, and powerful interest employed. Even when the favour was obtained, its value was seriously diminished by the restrictions with which it was clogged. The prisoner was obliged to receive his relative or friend in the council chamber, on one side of which he was placed, and his visitor on the other, with two officers between them; nor were the parties suffered to converse on any subject which had the most remote reference to the cause or circumstances of the prisoner's confinement. The same system was followed when one captive had an interview with another. There was but one case, in which incarcerated individuals could have a free interchange of thoughts; it was when the fulness of the prison, or the humanity of the governor, caused two of them to be located in the same chamber.

Intercourse by letters was equally shackled, though there was an insulting affection of a readiness to facilitate correspondence. It has, indeed, been conjectured, that "this apparent indulgence to prisoners was one of the many artifices employed to discover their secrets, and the persons with whom they were connected;" and this supposition may not be far from the truth. There can be no doubt, that of the letters written by captives, few arrived at their destination. We have seen, in the narrative of a prisoner, that the whole of those which he wrote were suppressed.

M. Linguet tells us, that, knowing the king's brothers, Monsieur and the Count d'Artois (afterwards Louis XVIII. and Charles X.) to be favourable to him, he wrote to them, to solicit their intercession. "The letters," says he, "were sealed. The lieutenant of police, some time after, told me he had read but not transmitted them; that he had not been allowed. When I observed to him that, since he knew the contents, he might make them known to the generous princes from whom he had detained them, he replied, that he had no access to such high personages. Thus the man, who was prohibited from approaching such high personages, had the privilege of breaking open and suppressing their letters, of rendering fruitless their good intentions and those of the monarch, and, in short, of raising round me ramparts more impenetrable than all the magic castles with which imagination has ever peopled our romances."

Profound secrecy and mystery were among the most prominent features in the management of the Bastile. He who was fortunate enough to emerge from this den of Cacus, was previously compelled to swear that he would never reveal whatever he had seen or heard during his abode in it. He who was retained, to waste away life within its dreary limits, was sedulously shut out from all knowledge of what was passing in the world. The malignant enemy, by whom he had been deprived of freedom, might be gone to his last account, but to *him* he still lived and tyrannized, for no whisper of his departure was suffered to reach him. When the fact of a person being in the Bastile was not so notorious as to preclude the possibility of denying it, his being there was unblushingly denied. When enquiry was made, the officers, the governor, the minister himself, would not scruple to affirm, and that,

too, in the most solemn manner, that they knew nothing of any such individual. Thus were his friends discouraged and led to slacken in their exertions for his relief, or wholly to discontinue them. If however, they discovered the falsehood, and persisted in their efforts, there was still another resource for defeating them; slander was resorted to, the worst crimes were attributed to him, and he was held up as an abandoned miscreant, whom it was a disgrace to patronize, and mercy to confine. At last, weariness, disgust, or death, robbed him of all who had loved or pitied him, and, even though his original prosecutor had ceased to exist, the victim was left to perish forgotten in his dungeon.

There was one object, besides the wish to elicit imprudent speeches or confessions, which had power to open the lips of the jailors; that object was the desire of tormenting, of making the prisoner feel how completely he was insulated from mankind, no less by its own baseness than by his prison walls. "I was daily told with a laugh," says M. Linguet, "that I ought not to trouble myself any longer about what the world was doing, because I was believed to be dead; the joke was carried so far as to relate to me circumstances which insane rage or horrible levity added to my pretended exit. I was assured, also, that I had nothing to hope from the warmth and fidelity of my friends; not so much because, like others, they were deceived with respect to my existence, as because they had become treacherous. This double imposture had for its purpose not merely to torture me, but at once to inspire me with a boundless reliance on the only traitor whom I had reason to fear, and who was perpetually represented as being my only true friend, and to discover from the manner in which I was affected by

these tidings, whether I had really any secrets which could lay me open to a betrayer."

Though the captive was not allowed to live with even a shadow of comfort, or to hasten his own end, a wide opening was left for death to accomplish his deliverance in one of the regular modes. From the evening meal till that of the morning, he was hermetically sealed up by massy, iron-lined double doors; in all that time no human being approached him. The turnkey slept in a distant chamber, where neither voice nor the sound of knocking could reach him. Bells seem to have been thought too great a luxury for the place. If illness suddenly came, there was no resource for the sufferer, but to call to the nearest sentinel, on the other side of the broad moat. If his voice were too weak, if his strength failed to carry him to the window, or if the wind drowned his cries, he must remain unaided. If his disorder were apoplectic, or he broke a blood-vessel, it is manifest that his fate was sealed. But, supposing him to be heard, prompt assistance was by no means to be expected. The sentinels gave the alarm to each other, till it reached the guard-house; the turnkey was then to be called, who, on his part, had to rouse the servant of the king's lieutenant, that he might awake his master, and procure from him the keys. Two hours were thus spent before the surgeon was drawn from his bed, where, in truth, he might as well have continued, since, interdicted as he was from prescribing by himself, he could only make a report to the governor, and promise that the physician, who resided three miles off, and was overloaded with practice, should be sent to on the morrow.

If the disease was not immediately dangerous, some medicine was brought, and the sick man must help him-

self as well as he could, and be thankful if his malady were not thought to be simulated. "But when he was reduced to extremity, when he was so far gone that he could not rise from the worm-eaten couch on which he lay, a nurse was given to him. And who was this nurse? a stupid, coarse, brutal invalid soldier, incapable of attentions, little assiduities, every thing which is indispensable for a sick person. But a still worse thing is, that when this soldier is once fastened on you, he can never quit you; he himself becomes a prisoner. It is therefore necessary to begin by purchasing his consent, and prevailing on him to be shut up with you as long as your captivity lasts; and, if you recover, you must make up your mind to bear the bad temper, the discontent, the reproaches, the ennui, of this companion, who takes ample vengeance upon your health for the seeming services which he has lent to your sickness."

There was yet another stab to be inflicted on those who were sinking into the grave, and by this the living could be wounded at the same time. To regulate the manner in which, after his death, his property shall be distributed, and, by so doing, to save a wife and offspring from the perplexity, endless trouble, expense, and perhaps ruin, which may arise out of a disputed succession, or the want of needful formalities, is a duty which every rational being will be anxious to perform. That the person is a captive, only renders more necessary the performance of the duty. But not so thought the myrmidons of the Bastile. It is on record that a prisoner, who was stretched for two months on a bed of sickness, expecting that each hour would be his last, repeatedly and vainly implored a French minister of state to grant him the customary legal aid for executing his will; his prayer was sternly refused, though

there was a lawyer, who belonged to the prison establishment. That this was a solitary instance, it would be folly to imagine.

It was not of unfrequent occurrence in the Bastile, for the bodily faculties of a prisoner to survive his mental. Shut out from the beautiful forms of nature, the treasures of intellect, and the delights of social converse, from all that can animate or console; racked by a thousand remembrances, conjectures, passions, and fears; brooding in deep seclusion and silence over the past and the present, and vainly struggling to penetrate the darkness of the future; his mind at length gave way, and idiotism or madness ensued. Yet even that must be deemed a blessing, if it brought with it oblivion of his fate.

But the long and unbroken series of woes is at last ended; death has rent asunder the fetters of the captive, and he is "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Is there yet a way left, by which his ingenious tormentors can make their vengeance reach beyond the grave, by which they can, in some measure, entail upon his kindred a share of suffering? There is. How was this important purpose effected in the Bastile? As soon as the breath was out of the body, a notice was sent to the minister of the home department and the lieutenant-general of police. The king's commissary then visited the prison, to minute down the circumstances. This being done orders were issued to inter the body. In the gloom of evening it was conveyed to the burying-ground of St. Paul's; two persons belonging to the Bastile attended it to sign the parish register; and the name under which the deceased was entered, and the description of the rank which he held, were fictitious, that all trace of him might be obliterated. Another register, containing

his real name and station, was, in truth, kept at the Bastile; but it was almost inaccessible, a sight of it, for the purpose of making an extract, being never allowed, without a strict inquiry into the reason why the application was made. His family and friends, meanwhile, remained in profound ignorance of his having been released from his troubles. No mourning mother, wife, or child, followed his remains to their last abode; and even the poor consolation was denied them of knowing the spot where he reposed, that they might water it with their tears. Thus, in death, as in life, oppression and malice triumphantly asserted their absolute dominion over the captives of the Bastile.

CHAPTER II.

Reign of John II – Stephen Marcel, Provost of the Merchants—Reign of Charles V.—Hugh Aubriot—Reign of Charles VI.—Noviant—La Riviere—Peter des Essarts—John de Montaigu—Contests of the factions at Paris—The Count of Armagnac—The Burgundians obtain possession of Paris—Massacre of the Armagnacs—Assassination of the Duke of Burgundy—Reign of Charles VII.—Paris in the hands of the English—Villiers de l'Isle Adam—The English expelled from Paris—Reign of Louis XI.—Anthony de Chabannes—The Count de Melun – Cardinal de Balue — William d'Haraucour — Charles d'Armagnac—Louis de Luxembourg--The Duke of Nemours and his children.

A MIND tinctured with superstition, even though it were not of the darkest hue, might be tempted to believe that a fatality pursued the men by whom the Bastile was raised. It has been seen that the original founder was the famous Stephen Marcel, Provost of the Merchants. Marcel, though his character has uniformerly been blackened by writers devoted to absolute monarchy, seems to have been influenced, at least in the greatest portion of his career, by truly patriotic motives. It is not the object which he laboured to obtain, but some of the means which he employed for its attainment, that merits censure. To confine the royal authority within reasonable bounds, and to give the national representatives their proper weight in the scale of government, were the purposes which he sought to accomplish. The dangerous circumstances in which the country was placed, and the heavy oppression under which the people groaned, pointed out such a reform as being no less wise than just. The time for attempting it was favourable; inasmuch as the captivity of the king, and the presence of a victorious foreign army, would, it was supposed, compel the dauphin,

Charles, to look to the States-General for the means of saving France from still greater calamities. Yet so strong was princely dislike to receiving aid from the legitimate guardians of the public purse, that Charles preferred raising supplies by the fraudulent and ruinous expedient of debasing the coin. In that scheme he was fortunately defeated by the stubborn opposition of the Provost.

The alliance formed by Marcel with Charles, surnamed the Bad, king of Navarre, was, perhaps, an impolitic act; not so much because the Navarrese monarch deserved the epithet given to him by French historians—for we may doubt whether he was, in reality, much more blameworthy than his namesake, the dauphin, on whom the same historians have lavished their praise—but because a junction with a man who was exceedingly obnoxious to a large party in France was likely to give rise to suspicions with respect to his principles and motives. It is probable, however, that he was led to it, by a wish to have some stronger prop to lean on than the fluctuating favour of the populace. The "varium et mutabile semper," by which Virgil, somewhat harshly, characterises the female sex, may, with less appearance of satire, be applied to the multitude. This truth Marcel was doomed to learn by experience.

For nearly two years, the Provost, with more or less steadiness, kept his footing on the tottering eminence to which he had risen. During that time he was actively engaged in securing the French capital from external and internal foes. He fortified and enlarged its circuit, supplied it with arms and provisions, established a guard of citizens, which was night and day on the watch, and barricaded the entrances of the streets by ponderous

chains, which were fastened to the houses; these chains were the first barricades which were formed in Paris.

The capital was undoubtedly saved from pillage and devastation by the provident care of Marcel. In spite, however, of his exertions, his popularity waned; the minds of his fellow citizens were poisoned by the arts and insinuations of the dauphin's friends, and irritated by his connexion with the king of Navarre, whose troops were mercilessly ravaging all the circumjacent country. While the Parisians were in this ferment, the dauphin promised a general amnesty to them, on condition of their giving up to him the Provost, and twelve other persons, whom he should select. Fearing, probably, that this temptation would be too great for them to resist, the Provost, in an evil hour, resolved to admit into the city the troops of the king of Navarre. It is also said, though there does not appear to be any proof of the fact, that he intended to make a general massacre of the opposite party, and transfer the crown of France to Charles the Bad. For this we have only the word of his enemies.

It was on the night of the 31st of July, 1358, that Marcel designed to open the gates of Paris to the Navarrese soldiery. He was too late. At noon, he went to the gate of the Bastile of St. Denis, and ordered the guard to deliver up the keys to Joceran de Mascon, the king of Navarre's treasurer. The guard refused to comply, and a loud altercation arose. The noise brought to the place John Maillard, the commandant of the quarter. Up to this moment, Maillard had been the zealous friend of Marcel, but he now resolutely opposed the scheme of the latter. A violent quarrel ensued between them, which ended by Maillard springing on horseback, unfurling the banner of France, and summoning the citizens

to assist him in preventing the Provost from betraying the city to the English. The summons speedily brought a throng around him. The friends of the dauphin, likewise, did not let slip this opportunity of acting in his behalf. A considerable body of men was collected by them, at the head of which were placed two gentlemen, named Pepin des Essarts and John de Charny.

From the gate of St. Denis, meanwhile, Marcel proceeded on the same errand to the other gates. He was not more successful than on his first attempt; obedience was everywhere refused. As a last resource, he bent his course to the Bastile of St. Anthony. Here again he was foiled. His enemies were beforehand with him. The keys he did by some means obtain, but they were useless. Maillard had already reached the scene of action, with a numerous train of his followers, and he was almost immediately joined by the partisans of the dauphin. With the keys of the Bastile in his hand, Marcel began to ascend the entrance ladder, striving at the same time to keep off his assailants. A terrible cry now burst forth of "Kill them! kill them! death to the Provost of the Merchants and his accomplices!" Alarmed by the clamour, he attempted to save himself by flight, but he was struck on the head with an axe by de Charny, and he fell at the foot of the Bastile, which he had himself built. His body was immediately pierced with innumerable wounds by the infuriated crowd. Giles Marcel, his nephew, and fifty-three others, the whole of the party which had attended him, were either slain on the spot or thrown into prison. Three days afterwards, the dauphin reentered Paris, and began to feed his revenge with blood.

By Hugh Aubriot the Bastile was advanced another step towards its completion. Born at Dijon, of humble

parents, Aubriot gained the favour of Charles the fifth, and of his brother, the Duke of Anjou, and was appointed minister of finance. He was also raised to the dignified though troublesome and dangerous office of Provost of Paris. Charles the fifth had a love of building, and he found in the Provost a man who had talents and activity to carry his wishes into effect. Paris was indebted to Aubriot for numerous works, which conduced to its safety, ornament, and salubrity. He strengthened and added to to the ramparts, constructed sewers, which he was the first to introduce into the capital, formed quays, rebuilt the Pont au Change, and built the Pont St. Michael. In these labours he employed, at a fixed rate of payment, all the mendicants, destitute persons, and disorderly characters of the city; thus compelling them to earn that subsistence which they had been in the habit of extorting or plundering from the citizens. The police of the city was greatly improved by him in other respects. Among the ordinances which he issued, for that purpose, was one which revived that of Louis the ninth, relative to prostitutes. Paris was now overrun with loose women; the ordinance enjoined them, under penalty of fine and imprisonment, to reside only in certain places, which were specified, to the number of nine.

The strict performance of his duty proved to be the ruin of Aubriot. Among the worst nuisances of the capital were the scholars of the University of Paris; they were addicted, among other things, to drunkenness, libertinism, and robbery, and their insolence was still more insufferable than their vices. Perpetual quarrels and contests, in which they were almost always the aggressors, took place between these votaries of learning and the citizens. The main cause of their excesses being thus

pushed beyond all bounds was the complete impunity which they enjoyed. Fonder of its privileges than of morality and justice, the University on all occasions strenuously resisted the efforts of the magistrates to bring scholars to punishment. In more than one instance it threw its protecting shield over plunderers and assassins, and pursued with a deadly hatred those individuals who had dared to enforce the laws against criminals. This crying abuse Aubriot determined to suppress. In the prison of the Little Châtelet, which was built by him, he ordered two strong and not over comfortable cells to be constructed, for the reception of delinquent scholars. These he called his *clos Bruneau* and *rue de Fouaire;* the University schools being situated in places which were so named. By this stinging joke, and by the vigorous measures of Aubriot, the University was inexpiably offended. Regardless of its anger, he, however, resolutely persisted in arresting and committing to prison every student who ventured to transgress.

While Charles the fifth lived, Aubriot remained safe; but the death of his patron, and the weakness and confusion of a minority, laid him open to the malice of his enemies. The University had sworn to accomplish his ruin, and this oath it held sacred. In his public character he had so deported himself as to be intangible; and, therefore, his private life was ransacked to find matter for accusation. It was discovered, or feigned, that he was too warm a lover of women, and, to give a darker colour to this fault, it was added, that he had an especial predilection for Jewesses. From this, by a curious process of logic, it was deduced as an inference, that he was himself a Jew and a heretic; his accusers not perceiving, or not choosing to perceive, that the one of these conditions

excluded the other. Their reasoning was akin to that which, in the fable, the wolf uses to the lamb. Unluckily, too, for the Provost, they resembled the wolf in other points; they had his savageness and his ability to injure. The University and the clergy joined in the clamour, against him, and were supported by the Duke of Berry, who was hostile to the Burgundian party, to which Aubriot belonged.

Charged with impiety and heresy, Aubriot was brought to trial before an ecclesiastical tribunal. With such prosecutors and such judges, conviction was certain. To such a pitch did the University and the clergy carry their animosity against him, that he would have been doomed to the flames, had not his friends at court powerfully exerted their influence to procure a milder sentence. But though his life was spared, he was not suffered to escape without feeling how venomous are the fangs of fanatics and pedants. He was condemned to public exposure and penance, in presence of the heads and scholars of the University, to ask pardon upon his knees, and, with no other food than bread and water, to spend in strict confinement the remnant of his days.

Aubriot was conveyed to the Bastile, to undergo the last part of his sentence. In the course of a few months, probably because he was treated with too much lenity in a state prison, he was removed to the bishop's prison, called For-l'Evêque, where he was thrown into one of those dungeons which bore the significant name of oubliettes. There he might have languished long, or perished quickly, but never have hoped for deliverance, had not in 1381, the intolerable oppression exercised by the government given rise to the insurrection which, from the circumstance of the revolters being armed with leaden

malls was called the Maillotin. In want of a leader, the insurgents bethought them of Hugh Aubriot; and it is not unlikely that, as he had suffered heavy wrongs, they supposed he would espouse their cause with heart and soul. They accordingly liberated him. Aubriot, however, was either too old, or too prudent, to become the head of a revolt; he spoke his deliverers fair, but, on the very evening that he was set free, he crossed the Seine, and hastened to Burgundy, his native country, where he is believed to have died in the following year.

While Charles the sixth was labouring under his first attack of insanity, the political feuds and intrigues which distracted his court gave fresh inhabitants to the Bastile. When in 1392, the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry assumed the government, the overthrow of Clisson, the constable of France, and prime minister, necessarily ensued, and in his fall was involved the ministry he had formed. Three of the ministers, La Begue de Villaine, Noviant, and La Riviere, were arrested; Montaign, the fourth, escaped to Avignon. La Begue, an aged man, who had served in the field with honour under several kings, was soon released; Noviant and La Riviere were reserved as scapegoats, and were shut up in the Bastile. Of Noviant nothing important is recorded. La Riviere had enjoyed, in the highest degree, the confidence and friendship of Charles the fifth; so much, indeed, did the monarch value him, that, by his express commands, whenever his favourite died, the royal mausoleum of St. Denis was to be the place of interment. At the accession of Charles the sixth, La Riviere suffered temporary eclipse; but he shone forth again when the young monarch assumed the reins of government.

Noviant and La Riviere were now in the hands of their enemies, and had little to hope; for they were rich enough

to excite a hungering after their spoils, and had been too long in possession of power not to be loathed by their rivals. It is the curse and the shame of politics, that they render men insensible to, or, which is still worse, incapable of acknowledging the merit really owned by those who differ from them in views and principles. Thorough-going politicians are but too apt to affirm what is false, or suppress what is true, provided it will injure their opponents. It follows, as a natural consequence of this unworthy feeling, that, though the two ministers fully vindicated themselves on every article of impeachment, they had but small chance of escaping. Their fate was deemed so inevitable, that more than once during the trial the brute populace rushed to the place of execution, lured by the report that the ministers were about to be brought to the scaffold. Luckily for them, they had a protector, stronger than their innocence. This was the young and lovely princess Jane, countess of Boulogne, the wife of the Duke of Berry. Her marriage with the duke had been brought about by the influence of La Riviere, and this circumstance, together with the minister's estimable qualities, had secured for him her affection and esteem. Her pleadings softened her husband, and thus prevented a deadly sentence from being passed on the fallen statesmen. It is not to be supposed, however, that they were allowed to go unscathed. To declare them guiltless would have been a tacit confession of error, an act which is not to be expected from weak and base minds; and, besides, hatred could not consent to let loose its objects without previously making them feel a touch of its fangs. The ministers, therefore, after having been captives for twelve months, and in hourly dread of death, were only condemned to confiscation of their property, and exile to a

distance from the court. With respect to the latter part of the sentence, they might well have exclaimed, like Diogenes, "and we condemn you to remain at court!" Charles, on his temporary return to sanity, restored their estates, but they were not again employed. La Riviere died in 1400, and was buried at St. Denis.

There was a moment when the Bastile seemed about to be converted to its original purpose, that of a fortress for the defence of Paris. After the Duke of Burgundy had, in 1405, obtained possession of the king, the dauphin, and the capital, preparations to recover Paris were made by the beautiful but worthless queen Isabella, and her paramour, the Duke of Orleans. In consequence of this, the Burgundian prince placed garrisons in the Bastile and the Louvre; and a report having been spread, that there was a plot to carry off the dauphin, a chain was stretched across the river, from the Bastile to the opposite bank, to prevent the passage of vessels. It was on this occasion that, to win the good will of the Parisians, the duke induced the king to restore to them the barricading chains, of which they had been deprived in 1383, and which had ever since been kept in the castle of Vincennes. The precautions were prudent, but they were made useless, by a treaty between the hostile parties.

It has already been observed, that the office of Provost of Paris was no less perilous than honourable. During the disturbed and disastrous reign of Charles the sixth, there were as many as twenty-four provosts, and there were few of them who did not find their dignity a burthen. Among the most unfortunate of them was Peter des Essarts. He was one of the French nobles who were sent to aid the Scotch in their contest with the English; and, in 1402, he fell into the hands of the latter. After

he was ransomed he returned to France, and became a zealous partisan of John the Fearless, the Duke of Burgundy. The duke amply rewarded him for his services. He successively obtained for him the posts of Provost of Paris, grand butler, grand falconer, first lay president of the chamber of accounts, supreme commissioner of woods and waters, and superintendent of finance, and also the governments of Cherbourg, Montargis, and Nemours.

As provost of Paris, it fell to his lot to arrest a man whose rise had been no less rapid than his own. His task was performed with a thorough good will. Montaigu, whom we have seen flying to Avignon after the downfall of Clisson, returned to the French capital when the storm was blown over. There he became more than ever a favourite of the king, who loaded him with honours, promoted his relations, and procured for his son the hand of the constable d'Albret's sister. Among the offices which were lavished on Montaigu, were those of finance minister and grand master of the royal household. His riches were soon increased to an enormous degree, and his pride to a still greater. To the duke of Burgundy he had rendered himself peculiarly obnoxious, by thwarting his plans, and being a determined adherent of the queen and the house of Orleans. The Burgundian affected to be reconciled to him, but he did not the less resolve upon his destruction. To accomplish the ruin of Montaigu, the duke instituted an inquiry into the conduct of those who had managed the finances; a species of inquiry which was always applauded by the tax-burthened people. At the same time, he likewise procured for the Parisians the restoration of various privileges, which had been taken from them as a punishment for the Maillotin insurrection. Having thus fortified his popularity, he took advantage

of the king being visited by one of his fits of madness, to commence operations against Montaigu. The favourite had been cautioned against his danger, and advised to fly from it, but confiding in the support of the queen and the Duke of Berry, he was deaf to advice. He was arrested in the street by des Essarts, and committed to the Little Châtelet. It strongly marks his insufferable pride and insolence, that, when he was seized by the provost, he exclaimed, "Ribald! how hast thou the audacity to touch me?" This was the arrogance of an upstart, for he was of humble birth. He was brought to trial, with little attention to the forms or the spirit of justice, and, after having been tortured, was condemned to lose his head; his property was confiscated, but, instead of being appropriated to replenish the treasury, it was divided among his enemies. The sentence was executed in the autumn of 1409.

If ambition had not entirely banished prudence, the fate of Montaigu might have taught des Essarts to reflect on the frail tenure by which, in an age of faction, the most conspicuous partisans hold their fortunes and their lives. Nor was he without a still more impressive warning. In a moment of displeasure, the Duke of Burgundy said to him, "Provost of Paris, John de Montaigu was three-and-twenty years in getting his head cut off, but verily you will not be three years about it:"—ominous words, where the prophet had the power of bringing his prophecy to pass!

In 1410 the contending factions once more resumed their arms. By a rapid march, the Burgundian prince made himself master of Paris, which he garrisoned with eight thousand men. For the support of the troops, a heavy tax was imposed upon the citizens. Des Essarts

was charged with the levying of this tax, and he is accused of having swelled his own coffers with the largest share of the produce. By this onerous measure, the popularity of the duke and the provost was materially diminished. In the course of a few months, the duke deemed it prudent to conclude another simular of a treaty; it was called the treaty of the Bicêtre, from the place where it was negotiated, and by one of its articles he consented that des Essarts should be removed from the provostship of Paris.

It seems impossible for the signers of such treaties to have put their hands to them without being tempted to laugh in each other's faces; the compacts were notoriously intended to be broken on the first favourable opportunity. Accordingly, but a few months elapsed, after the conclusion of the peace, before the Burgundian and Orleanists parties were again in arms, and vituperating each other in the most virulent language. Des Essarts was re-established as provost of Paris; and during the temporary ascendancy of the Orleanists, his exertions to supply the city with provisions gained for him, from the citizens, the flattering appellation of the Father of the People. When, however, the Parisians ceased to be in dread of having hungry bellies, they ceased to applaud him; and in the following year, he became an object of their hatred.

A sharp contest of a few months was terminated by another hollow truce, under the name of a peace. By this time the Burgundian prince appears to have been converted into a deadly enemy of des Essarts. Three causes are assigned for this change. The provost is said to have in private charged him with appropriating a large sum of the public money to his own use; to have entered into correspondence with the Orleanist leaders, and

warned them that the duke designed to assassinate them; and likewise to have formed, with the concurrence of the dauphin, a plan for rescuing that prince and the king from the state of tutelage in which they were kept by the Burgundian ruler. It is highly probable that, disgusted by the duke having abandoned him in the treaty of the Bicêtre, he had really gone over to the Orleanist faction. Any one of these causes was sufficient to make his former patron resolve upon his ruin. There was also another circumstance which wore a threatening aspect for des Essart. The States-general were now sitting at Paris, and in that assembly clamours began to be heard against financial depredators, amongst whom the multitude, so lately his adulators, did not hesitate to class him. To elude the storm, which he saw approaching from more than one quarter, he resigned his office of finance minister, in which he had succeded Montaigu; but he did not forget to secure an adequate compensation for the sacrifice which he made. He then retired to his government of Cherbourg.

The Burgundian was at this period in apparent amity with the dauphin; nor had he, as yet, openly manifested his animosity against the provost. The dauphin, was, however, at heart hostile to him, and impatient of his yoke. It was, no doubt, with a view to having a firm hold of Paris, that he resolved to become master of the Bastile; but to the duke the reason which he assigned was, the mutinous disposition of the people, which it was necessary to have the means of repressing. Imagining that the provost was still trusted by the duke, he proposed to confide to him the task of seizing upon the Bastile. The clearsighted Burgundian at once saw through the scheme, but he gave a willing consent to its execution;

for it would enable him to accomplish two objects, the getting of des Essarts into his hands, and the gaining a complete triumph over the dauphin himself. Des Essarts was consequently summoned from Cherbourg; he accepted the commission; and he managed so well, that he secured the Bastile without the least opposition.

The provost was scarcely in possession of the fortress before the scene changed. The Burgundian prince had skilfully laid a train, and a violent explosion suddenly took place. A rumour was spread throughout Paris, that the Orleanists, or Armagnacs, as they now began to be called, intended to carry off the dauphin with his own consent, and that the provost was at the head of the plot. A furious multitude, the leaders of which were two of the duke's attendants, immediately hurried to invest the Bastile on all sides. It swelled every moment, till it consisted of not fewer than twenty thousand armed men, all clamorous for the blood of des Essarts, and determined to storm the castle, in order to satisfy their rage. Another body, led by John de Troie, a surgeon, proceeded, at the same time, to the dauphin's palace, loaded him with insult, and arrested several of his officers and friends, some of whom were murdered on their way to prison.

The Duke of Burgundy now came forward, apparently as a mediator. The besiegers he induced to suspend their attack, by promising that their object should be attained without force being used. He then tried his eloquence on des Essarts. In the first interview he failed, in the second he succeeded. By dint of representing to him that it was impossible to restrain the people, and that, if they effected their entrance, which they certainly would, the Provost would be torn in pieces, he shook his resolution of defending himself; and by pledging his honour

that no harm should befall him, he finally prevailed on him to surrender.

Des Essarts would have done more wisely to brave death from the sanguinary crowd, than to rely on the honour of an acknowledged assassin. Ostensibly for the purpose of saving him from the violence of his enemies, he was led to the prison of the Châtelet, where he seems to have thought that all danger was at an end. He was speedily undeceived, by his being brought to trial. In addition to various crimes charged against him in his official capacity, he was accused of having caused the renewal of the war between the princes after the treaty of Chartres, and of having plotted to carry off from Paris the king, the queen, and the dauphin. He was, of course, found guilty, and was condemned to lose his head, and to have his remains suspended from the gibbet of Montfaucon. Four years had not elapsed since the convicted Montaigu was conveyed by him to the same spot. The sentence passed on des Essarts was executed on the first of July, 1413. He went to the scaffold with great courage, a circumstance which his enemies attributed to his having flattered himself that the people would rise and rescue him. If he entertained any such visionary hopes, his long experience of the people must have been entirely lost upon him.

The changes in the fortune of the two factions which desolated France, succeeded each other with an almost ludicrous rapidity; the party which was triumphant on one day was prostrate on the morrow. We have just seen the dauphin humbled by the Duke of Burgundy; yet the same year did not pass away before the dauphin and the Armagnacs gained the upper hand, and the duke found it prudent to retire to his own dominions. That

he might keep a firm hold of the capital, the dauphin gave the command of the Bastile to his uncle, Prince Louis of Bavaria; appointed the Duke of Berry governor of Paris; gave the provostship to Tanneguy de Chatel; removed to the Bastile the chains used for barricading the streets; and issued orders for the citizens to deliver up all kinds of arms.

The Duke of Burgundy appealed to the sword, but without success, and the treaty of Arras, which was the result of his failure, relieved France for awhile from his incursions and his intrigues. It was not till nearly two years afterwards, when the battle of Agincourt had given a rude shock to the French throne, that he re-appeared upon the scene. Under his auspices, the Burgundian faction at Paris formed a conspiracy for a general massacre of the Armagnacs, in which the king himself was not to be spared, should he venture to resist. It was detected at the critical moment, and the Armagnacs avenged themselves by murders, proscriptions, and excessive taxes, which alienated many of their friends, without crushing their enemies.

The death of the dauphin Louis, speedily followed by that of his brother and successor John, gave the dignity of dauphin to Charles, the youngest son of the king The duke of Burgundy had hoped to exercise an influence over John, but he had only hostility to expect from Charles, who, as far as a boy of fifteen could be anything, was a partisan of the Armagnacs. By war alone could anything be gained, and he therefore prepared to wage it. The gross impolicy of the opposite party gave him manifold advantages. While the Count of Armagnac, the constable, who was the head of the reigning faction, goaded the people by forced loans, enormous imposts, and

severities against all whom he suspected, he and the dauphin contrived also to exasperate the queen, by seizing her treasures, casting, perhaps not undeservedly, a stain upon her character, and banishing her to Tours. Driven to desperation by these injuries and insults, she abjured her long-cherished hatred of the duke, and wrote to him for succour. He gladly listened to the call, released her from captivity, and escorted her to Chartres, where, in virtue of an obsolete ordinance of the king, she assumed the title of regent, and created a parliament, to counterbalance that of the capital. A preponderating weight was thus thrown into the scale of the Burgundian prince. Nor did he neglect to strengthen himself by conciliating the people; for, while the count of Armagnac was daily irritating them by his extortions, the duke held out to them a tempting lure, by proclaiming that all the towns which opened their gates to him should be freed from taxes. Encouraged by these circumstances, his partisans in the capital formed a plan for admitting him into the city; but it was discovered and frustrated.

The return of our Henry the fifth to France in 1417, and the progress which he was making in Normandy, recalled to their senses most of the leaders of the factions. The necessity of union being felt, negotiations were opened. The queen, the dauphin, and the Duke of Burgundy were willing to come to terms; the principal article agreed on was, that the queen and the duke should form a part of the royal council. But the Count of Armagnac would hear of no treaty that did not really leave in his hands the whole power of the state; and he accordingly strained every nerve, and was even guilty of the most revolting cruelty, to render impossible an accommodation with the Burgundian leaders. He little dreamt how soon he was to

be precipitated from the pinnacle of greatness, and trampled in the mire by the basest of the base.

Harassed and impoverished by tyranny and exaction within the walls, and beset by foes beyond them, the Parisians were hungering for peace. They were the more inveterate against Armagnac, because they were tantalised by the object for which they longed being almost within their reach. Peace had, in fact, been concluded at Montereau, and publicly announced in Paris, and the count, seconded by de Marle, the chancellor, was the sole obstacle to its being enjoyed. He was inflexible in his resistance. To bring about a rupture of the treaty, he sent troops to attack two of the Burgundian posts; seemingly struck with a judicial blindness, the forerunner of his fall, he pushed to an unbearable length his arrogance, extortion, and gloomy precautions; and he is said to have even meditated a sweeping massacre of such of the citizens as were hostile to him, and to have ordered leaden medals to be struck for distribution to his partisans, that the murderers might distinguish them in the hour of carnage. If the character of the man, and the spirit of those barbarous times, were not in accordance with this sanguinary project, we might, perhaps, imagine him to be unjustly charged with it; for, in all ages, it has been the custom to blacken an overthrown tyrant, by loading him with imaginary crimes. That, however, it was possible for persons of the highest rank to tolerate, and probably to command, the cold-blooded slaughter of their foes was but too speedily proved.

Terrible as the multitude is when once moved, it is slow to be moved. Mutual distrust, and the dread of failure keep its component parts from uniting, till some one, more daring than the rest, or provoked into action by

flagrant wrongs, assumes the lead, and gives to it the principle of cohesion. It was a denial of justice which brought into play the man who was wanting, to convert into open revolt the passive disaffection of the citizens. The servant of an Armagnac noble having grossly maltreated Perinet le Clerc, whose father, an ironmonger, was the quartinier, or magistrate of his ward, Perinet applied to the provost for redress. His application was contemptuously rejected, and he swore to be revenged. In concert with some of his friends, he matured a plan for admitting the Burgundian troops, and he opened a correspondence on the subject with Villiers de l'Isle Adam, who commanded at Pontoise, for the duke. The chance of success seemed so fair, that l'Isle Adam readily agreed to risk a portion of his garrison in the attempt. The negotiation was conducted with so much secrecy that not a breath of it transpired.

The plan was carried into effect on the night of the 28th of May, 1418. Perinet was a man of ready resources, equally discreet and resolute, and he omitted nothing that could tend to secure a triumph. By virtue of his office, the father of Perinet held the keys of St. Germain's gate, and had the relieving of the guard there. On the appointed night, having first contrived to place on guard many of his associates, Perinet stole to his father's bed-side, and, undiscovered, drew the keys from beneath his pillow. L'Isle Adam was waiting near the gate with eight hundred men. At two in the morning, it was opened by Perinet, who, as soon as the troops had entered, locked the gate, and threw the keys over the walls, that, retreat being impossible, the soldiers might be compelled to combat with desperate valour. The adventurers proceeded in dead silence along the streets till they reached the Little Châtelet,

where they were joined by several hundred armed citizens, who had been assembled to receive them. The confederates now loudly raised the rallying cry of "Peace! peace! Burgundy for ever!" and it was soon as loudly echoed from every side. From all the streets crowds of citizens sallied forth, wearing on their dress the St. Andrew's cross, which was the distinguishing mark of the Burgundian party. In a very short time, tens of thousands were in arms.

Scattered over a large city, and taken by surprise, the Armagnacs could make no resistance. Tannegui du Châtel, the governor of the Bastile, had barely time to hurry to the dauphin's abode, snatch him half awaked from the couch, wrap him in the bedclothes, and convey him for safety to the Bastile, whence, without delay, he removed him to Melun. While he was thus occupied, a party of Burgundians marched to the king's palace, and compelled him to take horse, and put himself at their head. Other parties spread themselves over the city, and slaughtered, or dragged to prison, all the Armagnacs on whom they could lay their hands. Nobles, warriors, ministers of state, bishops, abbots, magistrates, and the humble followers who had moved at their beck, were indiscriminately thrust into durance. The jails were speedily crowded till they could hold no more, and it then became necessary to confine the captives in public buildings and private houses. The constable, in the rags of a beggar, at first eluded his pursuers, and found shelter in the dwelling of a poor mason; but a threatening proclamation against whoever should harbour an Armagnac, terrified his host into betraying him.

The Bastile, and consequently the power of entering Paris, was yet held by Tannegui du Châtel. In the hope

of recovering the capital before preparations could be made for its defence, he hurried back from Melun, along with other officers, among whom was Barbazan, who is honourably distinguished in the French annals, as the irreproachable knight, and the restorer of the kingdom and crown of France. At the head of a large body of gendarmes, he, on the first of June, made a sally from the Bastile, and advanced up St. Anthony's street, towards the palace, with the intention of making himself master of the king's person. The king, however, had been removed, and Tannegui was soon encountered by l'Isle Adam, who had gathered together some troops, and was every moment reinforced by the citizens. A desperate contest took place, but the Armagnac general was finally compelled to retreat, with the loss of four hundred men. The corpses of the slain were ignominiously thrown into the common sewer by the victors. Leaving a small garrison in the Bastile, he retired with the remainder of his force, and distributed it among the neighbouring fortresses of Corbeil, Meaux, and Melun. Two days after the departure of Tannegui, the governor of the Bastile deemed it prudent to capitulate.

Already irritated by Tannegui's attempt, the partisans of the Burgundians were excited almost to madness by a letter from the queen, in which she declared that neither she nor the duke would return to Paris, till it was purged of the Armagnacs. It has been truly remarked, that "such a letter was, in reality, a decree of death." That was the construction put upon it by the Burgundian faction; and, unrestrained by any religious or humane feeling, they promptly carried the sentence into effect. On the morning of the 12th of June, a report being spread that the enemy were attacking two of the gates, the

citizens hastily assembled from every quarter. "All issued from their houses," says an old writer, "like swarms of bees from various hives. Malls, hatchets, axes, clubs, poles shod with iron points, swords, pikes, javelins, and halberts, were called into use by the insurgent people."

The signal of carnage was given by one Lambert, who harangued them, and proposed to massacre the captives. His sanguinary suggestion was instantly adopted by the brutal crowd, and they hurried to the numerous prisons, uttering loud cries of "Kill those dogs! Kill those Armagnac traitors!" A scene of horror ensued at which nature shudders. Some of the victims were flung from the towers of the buildings upon the pikes of the assassins; some were chopped down with hatchets, some were drowned, and others were burned alive in their dungeons; their mangled remains were exposed to every kind of indignity; and torrents of blood flowed through the streets. From the jails the slaughter was extended to the suspected inhabitants of houses, and was followed by pillage. The work of murder and robbery was untiringly continued throughout the whole of the night, and was recommenced in the morning, after the labourers in it had refreshed themselves by a short repast.

Nineteen hundred of the Armagnacs are said to have fallen on this terrible day. Nor did they alone suffer, for numbers of the Burgundian party fell beneath the weapons of their private foes, who availed themselves of this opportunity to gratify their revenge. After having for three days been dragged through the streets by the mob, the naked and disfigured corpse of the constable was conveyed out of Paris in the scavengers' cart, and thrown among the filth and ordure of the city laystall.

That no proof of their ferocity might be wanting, his murderers cut a portion of his skin into the form of a scarf, and hung it round him in ridicule of the white scarf which was the badge of his party.

A supplementary massacre, of equal extent, and attended by circumstances equally atrocious, occurred shortly after, in which perished the prisoners from the Bastile and Vincennes, and those who had been arrested since the first slaughter. On this occasion, the captives in the Great and Little Châtelet strove to defend themselves, by hurling down stones and tiles on their enemies, but their resistance was soon overpowered, and not one of them escaped.

These enormities—prefigurations of those which, nearly four centuries later, were to be committed in the same city—were succeeded by riotous rejoicings for the arrival of the queen and the duke, and by "one of the finest religious processions that ever was seen." But the wrath of Heaven did not slumber long. "The joy of Paris," says an old annalist, "was speedily changed into mourning, for three months had not passed away after this carnage, when so cruel a pestilence fell upon the city, that it destroyed more than eighty thousand persons in three months. History records, that this Perinet and his companions, after having squandered all that they had gained by plunder, died miserably, not long enjoying the fruits of their robberies; and that the greater part of the nobles and gentlemen, who had acted with the murderers, were carried off by the pestilence, except l'Isle Adam, who was reserved to be chastised by king Henry of England, though it was on another account, as we shall relate in the proper place. And was it not God who took vengeance for these cruelties?"

In a little more than a year from this time, John the Fearless, himself an assassin, fell by an assassin's hand, at the conference of Montereau. His life had been productive of great evils to France; his death brought on it still greater. The murder of John gave birth to that coalition between his successor Philip the Good, Henry the fifth of England, and queen Isabella, which, for more than a quarter of a century, deluged the kingdom with blood, and nearly wrested the sceptre from the ancient line of monarchs. In 1420, Paris was delivered into the hands of the English, and for sixteen years they retained possession of it; the Louvre, the Bastile, and Vincennes, were their principal posts in the capital and its immediate vicinity.

The only prisoner whom, during their domination, the English are recorded to have confined in the Bastile, was the very man but for whose activity and daring the capital would, perhaps, never have been in their power. It was l'Isle Adam. This warrior, who was born about 1384, of an ancient and noble family, was taken by the English, at Honfleur, 1415. After he recovered his liberty, he joined the party of John the Fearless, and was made governor of Pontoise. We have seen by what means he gained Paris for the Burgundian prince. That he was deeply implicated in the massacres appears to be a melancholy truth; and all his talents and valour are insufficient to cleanse his reputation from that damnable spot. For his services he was rewarded, by the Duke of Burgundy, with the rank of marshall.

It is not clear in what manner l'Isle Adam incurred the displeasure of our Henry the fifth, the regent of France. French writers ascribe the circumstance to the pride and arrogance of the English sovereign, who required the

most abject homage from all his French courtiers. L'Isle Adam, they tell us, having one day come into the royal presence in a plain grey dress, the monarch sternly asked him whether that was a fit dress for a marshall. "Dearest lord," said the offender, "I had it made to travel in from Sens to Paris;" and, while he spoke, he looked at the king. "What!" exclaimed Henry, do you dare to look a prince in the face?" "Most dread lord," "answered the marshall, "it is the custom in France; and if any one avoids looking at the person to whom he talks, he is considered as a bad man and a traitor: therefore, in God's name, do not be offended."—"Such is not our custom," Henry sourly replied, and here the dialogue ended. If this story be true, it speaks ill for the policy, and worse for the disposition, of the victor of Agincourt.

A few days after this conversation is supposed to have occurred, l'Isle Adam was committed to the Bastile, on the false and absurd charge of meaning to betray Paris to the dauphin. About a thousand of the citizens took up arms to rescue him, on his way to the fortress, but they were put to flight by the small band of English archers, which was escorting him to prison. L'Isle Adam, it is affirmed, would have passed from the Bastile to the scaffold, had he not been saved by the remonstrances of Philip the Good, and the death of Henry.

After the decease of Henry, l'Isle Adam rejoined the Burgundian standard, and took so active and effective a part in the war, that, when the order of the Golden Fleece was established, he was one of the first on whom it was conferred. In 1437, he followed the Duke of Burgundy into Brabant, and on the 22nd of May, of that year, he was killed in a popular insurrection which took place at Bruges.

It was not till the 22nd of September, 1429, that any attempt was made to disturb the English in their occupation of Paris. Flushed with its recent successes, and hoping that the citizens would rise upon the garrison, the army of Charles assaulted on that day the ramparts of the capital, between the gates of St. Honoré and St. Dennis. The assault, led by Joan of Arc, continued for four hours; but the glorious heroine was severely wounded through the thigh, and the assailants were compelled to retire.

For seven years after this attack, the English kept their ground in Paris. But the English power in France was now daily crumbling into dust. The Burgundian, their ally for several years, was become their active enemy; the Duke of Bedford, whose valour and skill so long upheld a tottering cause, had sunk into the grave; town after town, willingly or on compulsion, opened its gates to Charles; succours arrived seldom and in scanty numbers; and frequent insurrections, in Normandy and other quarters, compelled them to disseminate their troops, so that it became impossible for them to take the field with a formidable army. At this critical moment, Paris had only a feeble garrison of fifteen hundred men; a force wholly inadequate to defend the place, even had the citizens been far less disaffected than they really were. They were weary of war, and, besides, prudence dissuaded them from persisting to oppose a sovereign whose throne was evidently established on a solid basis. Such being the state of things, Charles thought the time was come to recover his capital. A negotiation was secretly opened with the citizens; and, on condition of a general amnesty, they agreed to return to their allegiance. On the night of the 13th of April, 1436, the king's troops were admitted into the city. Though he was taken by surprise,

Willoughby, the governor, a brave and intelligent officer, took such measures as would have baffled his assailants, had he received any aid from the Parisians. But not a hand was raised in his behalf, and he had no other resource than a retreat to the Bastile, which he effected in good order. An honourable capitulation, allowing him to retire, with bag and baggage, to Rouen, was offered to Willoughby, and, as he knew that resistance must be unavailing, he wisely accepted an offer which he could not hope would be repeated. Thus ended the sway of the English in Paris.

During the remainder of the reign of Charles VII., nothing more occurred which belongs to this narrative. Abundant materials are, however, supplied by the iron sway of his son and successor, Louis XI. Historians in speaking of Louis XI., have charactered him, and with justice, as a violator of all social duties, as being a "bad son, a bad husband, a bad father, a bad brother, a bad kinsman, a bad friend, a bad neighbour, a bad master, and a most dangerous enemy." That, on attaining supreme power, such a man should take heavy vengeance for injuries, real or supposed, is in the natural order of things. Immediately on his accession to the throne, Louis displaced from their offices all persons who had rendered themselves obnoxious to him; and, in some instances, his revenge was more signally manifested.

Among the most conspicuous of those who felt his anger was Anthony de Chabannes, Count of Dammartin. Chabannes had played an active part in the long war between Charles VII. and the English, and on various occasions had done signal service. Like many other nobles of that period, he was, however, possessed of far more courage than honourable principles. To swell his

coffers with plunder, he did not hesitate to put himself at the head of the ferocious banditti known by the descriptive name of *écorcheurs*, or flayers, with whom he ravaged the north-eastern provinces of France, as far as the Swiss frontier. He quitted them in 1439, to marry a rich wife, after which he again entered into the king's service.

Chabannes, as is often the case with criminals, could more easily commit crimes than bear to be told of them. The monarch having one day laughingly greeted him by the title of king of the flayers, he angrily replied, "I never flayed any but your enemies; and it appears to me that you have derived more benefit from their skins than I have." Not satisfied with this retort, he further gratified his offended feelings by prompting the dauphin to become the leader of the malcontents, in the ephemeral civil war which is known as the war of the *Praguerie.*

After the Praguerie was over, Chabannes was again received into favour by Charles, and he seems ever after to have remained faithful to him. He even disclosed a conspiracy which the dauphin had formed, to deprive the monarch of his crown and liberty. The dauphin, on being brought face to face with him, hardily denied the fact, and gave him the lie. The conduct of Chabannes, in this instance, was not undignified. "I know," said he, "the respect which is due to the son of my master; but the truth of my deposition I am ready to maintain, by arms, against all those of the dauphin's household who will come forward to contradict it." No one was hardy enough to accept this challenge.

It is less creditable to Chabannes, that he presided over the commission which was appointed to try, or rather to find guilty, the persecuted Jacques Cœur, and that he contrived to obtain, at a shamefully inadequate price, several of Cœur's estates.

In 1455, Chabannes, by performing his duty to his sovereign, gave fresh offence to the dauphin. Irritated at last by the political intrigues of his son, and by his having persisted for ten years to absent himself from the court, Charles determined to deprive him of the petty sovereignty of Dauphiné, and to secure his person. Chabannes was chosen to carry this determination into effect: and he acted with such vigour, that after having prevailed on the Duke of Savoy to refuse the prince an asylum, he compelled him to seek shelter in the dominions of the duke of Burgundy.

Chabannes was, consequently, one of the earliest victims on the accession of Louis to the throne. Deprived of his office of grand master of France, he took flight, but he soon returned, and claimed a fair trial. The king refused to admit the claim, and ordered him to quit the kingdom; an order which he obeyed. While he was absent, his property was confiscated, and he was summoned to appear, and answer the charges against him. Confiding in his innocence, he complied with the summons; but he was found guilty of high treason, and condemned to death. The sentence was commuted to banishment by Louis; who, however, changed his mind as to the punishment, and shut him up in the Bastile.

In the Bastile Chabannes remained for four years. On the breaking out of the war (the parties in which called their confederacy the League of the Public Good), he contrived to escape; and, on his way to join the malcontents, he made himself master of the towns of St. Fargeau and St. Maurice. He was one of those who benefited by the treaty of Conflans, which terminated this war. His sentence was annulled, and his estates were restored to him.

It is a singular circumstance that, with respect to Chabannes, Louis passed at once from the extreme of hatred and suspicion, to that of kindness and confidence He not only restored his estates, but he added to their number. At a latter date, when he instituted the order of St. Michael, Chabannes was one of the first whom he nominated. Favours conferred by a gloomy and unprincipled tyrant cast a doubt on the character of the receiver, even when it has been hitherto unstained, which was not the case with the new knight. The nomination gave occasion to a severe sarcasm from the Duke of Brittany. Louis having sent to him the collar of the order, the duke declined it, assigning as a reason, that, "he did not choose to draw in the same collar with Chabannes."

Chabannes was not ungrateful for the benefits bestowed on him. When, strangely deviating from his accustomed wariness, Louis involved himself in the dilemma which Sir Walter Scott has so admirably described in Quentin Durward, Chabannes did him the most essential and opportune service, and received his warmest thanks for it. He was afterwards employed in various important expeditions, all of which he brought to a successful issue. In his old age, he withdrew from the court, but, in 1485, Charles VIII. conferred on him the government of the Isle of France and Paris. Chabannes did not long enjoy this new honour: he died in 1488.

The war, caused by the League of the Public Good, which restored liberty and fortune to Chabannes, deprived his enemy, the Count de Melun, not only of both, but of life also. When we are told that Melun was so addicted to pleasure, luxury, and sloth, as to have acquired the name of the Sardanapalus of his times, we can form no

very flattering estimate of his character. Yet he stood high in the good graces of Louis XI., and participated largely in the spoils of Chabannes. In his capacity of governor of Paris and the Bastile, he was also entrusted with the custody of that nobleman. It was not till after the battle of Montlhéri that Louis began to suspect him. The monarch had, indeed, some excuse for suspicion. Melun had at least been criminally negligent, in a post which demanded the utmost vigilance. He had prevented a sally from the city during the battle, which might have turned the scale in the king's favour; and he had been ignorant of, or winked at, a correspondence carried on with the chiefs of the league by some of the disaffected citizens. These indications of treachery were strengthened by two circumstances; some of the cannon of the Bastile had been spiked, and the gates of the fortress, on the side next the country, had been left open while the besiegers were making an attack. The escape of Chabannes might also afford a reason for doubting his keeper's fidelity. Louis, however, was, at this moment, too closely pressed by his numerous enemies to enter into an investigation of the subject; and he, therefore, only dismissed the governor.

Melun retired to his estates, and imagined that the storm was blown over. He was mistaken. As soon as Louis had disembarrassed himself, he instituted a rigid inquiry into the conduct of his disgraced favourite. One of the most active in pushing it on was a man who was indebted to the count for his rise in life; the cardinal Balue, of whom further mention is about to be made. The result of the inquiry was, a charge of having maintained a secret correspondence with the heads of the League, especially with the Duke of Brittany. Melun

was in consequence arrested, and conveyed to Château-Galliard, in Normandy, by the provost Tristan l'Hermite, of infamous memory.

The trial was commenced without delay, and, as he refused to confess to any crime, he was put to the torture. With respect to his correspondence with the chiefs of the League, he avowed it, but pleaded that it had the king's sanction. It is probable that this was really the case. Many motives might have induced the king to allow of his officer corresponding with the enemy. But Louis had now resolved upon the destruction of Melun; and, as he never scrupled at falsehood when he had any point to gain by it, he denied that he had given the permission. By adding that he had long had cause to be dissatisfied with the prisoner, he gave a broad hint as to what kind of verdict he desired. The judges, as in duty bound, pronounced Melun guilty, and he was consigned to the scaffold. His execution took place in 1468. Of his confiscated property, a considerable portion was bestowed on Chabannes.

It is said, that the executioner having only wounded him at the first stroke, Melun raised his head from the block, and declared, that he had not deserved death, but that, since the king willed it, he was satisfied. If this be true, we must own that tame submission to the injustice of a despot was never more strikingly displayed.

Had Melun lived but a little longer, he might have triumphed in the downfall and punishment of his ungrateful enemy, the cardinal, which took place in 1469. John Balue, the person in question, born in Poitou in 1421, was the son of either a miller or a tailor. He had, perhaps, as many vices, and as few virtues, as any person upon record. Ingratitude, in particular, seems to have been deeply rooted into the nature of this unworthy pre-

late. Towards the bishops of Poitiers and Angers, who had early patronized and confided in him, and the Count de Melun, by whom he was introduced to the monarch, he acted with unparalleled baseness. His sovereign fared no better than his other benefactors. Louis XI. had rapidly raised him to the highest offices in the state, and had loaded him with ecclesiastical preferment, yet the traitor betrayed him.

While his power lasted, there was no department of the government with which Balue did not interfere. This trait in the character of the cardinal called forth a pleasant sarcasm from Chabannes, who could not see with patience his own province invaded. Balue having one day reviewed some regiments, Chabannes gravely requested the king's permission to visit the cardinal's bishopric of Evreux, for the purpose of examining clerical candidates, and conferring ordination on them. "What do you mean?" said Louis. "Why, surely, sire," replied Chabannes, "I am as fit to ordain priests, as the Bishop of Evreux is to review an army."

It required, however, something more than a joke to shake the confidence which the monarch placed in the cardinal. That something more was not slow in coming. Since the treaties of Conflans and Peronne, it had been a main object of Louis to dissociate his brother, the Duke of Berry, from his dangerous adviser the Duke of Burgundy; and, as one means towards effecting this, he strove hard to induce him to accept, as an appanage, the duchy of Guienne and the government of Rochelle, instead of the provinces of Champagne and Brie, which, by the treaty of Peronne, he had been compelled to confirm to his brother. Louis was undoubtedly justified in wishing to accomplish this object, as there was little chance that

peace would be preserved if the Duke of Berry became an immediate neighbour of the Duke of Burgundy. Nor was the equivalent which the king offered for Champagne and Brie an inadequate one, but much the contrary. On this occasion, the king suffered the penalty to which all deceivers are subjected, that of not being trusted. Could the Duke of Berry have put faith in his brother, he no doubt would have accepted Guienne.

It was with no less surprise than indignation that the king discovered, by intercepted letters, that all his efforts, not only in this case but in others, had been counteracted by the man on whom he most relied. The cardinal, and his friend and agent William d'Haraucourt, Bishop of Verdun, were in close correspondence with his enemies. It was to revenge himself for the king having failed in his promise to procure him a cardinal's hat, that d'Haraucourt entered into the plot against him. It would seem that nothing short of madness could have prompted the cardinal to peril his liberty and fortune, perhaps his life, by his treasonable proceeding. But here again the king was whipped by his own vices. Balue perceived or imagined that his influence was declining, he was convinced that it would wholly expire whenever his services were no longer necessary to the monarch, Louis being, in his opinion, incapable of personal attachment; and he therefore resolved to place him in such a situation, by making the king's foes formidable, that those services should be always indispensable. On his being interrogated, he avowed, with a shameless candour, that, for this purpose, he had betrayed the secrets of the state to the Burgundian duke, encouraged the Duke of Berry to refuse the proposed exchange, advised the calamitous interview and disgraceful treaty of Peronne, and recommended to Charles

of Burgundy to compel the king to accompany him on the expedition against the revolted citizens of Liége.

There was treason enough here to forfeit a hundred heads, had they grown on laic shoulders. But, as far as regarded the final penalty of the law, their ecclesiastical character proved a shield to the cardinal and his associate. The king desired the pope to nominate apostolical commissioners to try the criminals; the pope, on the other hand, contended that they must be judged by the consistory, and that the decision of their fate must be left to him. A long negotiation ensued between the spiritual and temporal sovereigns, and, as neither would concede, the offenders were never brought to trial at all.

It cannot, however, be said that the cardinal and the bishop escaped unscarred. If Louis could not take their lives, he could at least render their lives a burthen, and this was a power which he was not backward in exercising. In the province of Touraine, between twenty and thirty miles to the southward of Tours, stood the castle of Loches, one of the sepulchres in which Louis buried his living victims. It was there that, at a later period, Ludovico Sforza lingered out the last years of his existence. Loches was well provided with oubliettes, dungeons, chains of enormous weight, facetiously called the king's little daughters, iron cages, and all other means of torturing the body and mind. Thither Balue was sent, and there he passed eleven lonely years, in an iron cage, which was only eight feet square. His fate resembled that of Perillus—for to the cardinal himself is attributed the invention of these cages. Perhaps the only praise which he ever deserved was gained at the castle of Loches; the praise of having preserved his courage unshaken throughout the whole of his tedious captivity. Balue was released

in 1480, went to Rome, where he was received with open arms, was sent as legate to France, and died in 1491, bishop of Albano, and legate of the March of Ancona.

His confederate, d'Haraucourt, was still more severely punished. The Bastile was his place of confinement, and there a cage, of unusual strength, was constructed in one of the towers, expressly for his abode. The cage was formed of massy beams, bolted together with iron, occupied nineteen carpenters for twenty days in framing it, and was so heavy that the vault, which was to support it, was obliged to be rebuilt in a more substantial manner. Within its narrow and gloomy limits, d'Haraucourt was immured for no less than fifteen years. It was not till after the death of Louis the eleventh, that the prisoner was set at liberty. He died, at a very advanced age, in the year 1500.

While d'Haraucourt was wasting away life in his cage, there was another prisoner in the Bastile, who was enduring far worse misery, and was far more worthy of compassion, because, though he was himself guiltless, he suffered the penalty of another's crimes. When in 1473, the restless and unprincipled John, Count of Armagnac, was slain at Lectoure, by the royal troops, his brother Charles, who had taken no part in the contest, was arrested by order of Louis the eleventh, sent to the Conciergerie, and put to the torture. He was on the point of proving his innocence, when he was removed to the Bastile, and secluded from all access of friends. L'Huillier, the governor, treated him with a cold-blooded barbarity which was worthy of a man who held office under Louis. There was nothing that cruelty could suggest that was not practised on the unfortunate Charles. The agonies of the captive were protracted for a period of fourteen

years, during all which time he inhabited a dreary and noisome dungeon, in which water almost continually dropped upon him, and he could not move without wading through slimy mud. He was liberated, and his property was restored, by Charles the eighth. The boon, however, came too late to be of any avail. His reason was shaken by what he had undergone; he languished for a few years, and died in 1497.

Less compassion is due to the next inhabitant of the Bastile who appears upon the scene. Faithful to no party, he fell regretted by none. Louis de Luxembourg, Count of St. Pol, who was born in 1418, succeeded to the possessions of his father when he was only fifteen. He did not receive his moral education in schools where humanity and honour were to be learned. His uncle and guardian, Count de Ligni, was well qualified to brutalise his youthful mind. It was de Ligni that basely sold the heroine Joan of Arc to the English, for ten thousand livres. In one of his campaigns, he took his nephew with him, that the boy might kill some of the prisoners, in order to accustom him to scenes of blood. Louis is said to have proved an apt scholar, and to have taken delight in the performance of his murderous task.

At his outset in life, St. Pol, like most of his family, was a warm partisan of the English party. Circumstances, however, having compelled him to visit the court of Charles the seventh, he met with so flattering a reception that he deserted his party, and devoted himself to that monarch. With the dauphin (who was afterwards Louis the eleventh) he contracted as close a friendship as can subsist between two such characters. St. Pol distinguished himself in the service of his new master on various occasions, particularly at the sieges of the Norman fortresses.

Though St. Pol had given up the English party, he did not break off his old connection with the Burgundian prince. He fought for him against the insurgent citizens of Ghent, and he even joined in the League of the Public Good, as it was ludicrously styled, and led the vanguard of the count de Charolais, at the battle of Montlhéri. At the peace of Conflans, Louis, in the hope of winning him over from the Burgundian interest, promoted him to be constable of France; and soon after, with the same view, he gave him the hand of Mary of Savoy, the queen's sister, and granted him a wide extent of territory.

These favours did not produce the desired effect. St. Pol seems to have had little gratitude in his nature; and, in this case, he perhaps thought that there was none due for what was rather a bribe than a free gift. As he imagined that his safety consisted in preventing a good understanding between the king and the Duke of Burgundy, he was constantly intriguing to keep them at variance, and he alternately betrayed them. His intrigues being discovered, the two princes, during one of their short periods of amity, entered into a compact, by which they declared him their common enemy. The Duke of Burgundy promised that, if the constable fell into his hands, he would surrender him to the king within eight days. For this he was to be rewarded by the restoration of St. Quentin, Amiens, and other towns on the Somme. This agreement was of course kept a profound secret.

What St. Pol had already done was sufficient to seal his fate; but he roused the anger of Louis still farther by an act of personal disrespect, and by leaguing with Edward the fourth of England for the invasion of France. It was not, however, till he had got rid of Edward by a treaty, and had artfully contrived to irritate the Duke of

Burgundy still more against St. Pol, that Louis seriously prepared for taking vengeance on the offender. The negotiation between Edward and Louis had already alarmed the constable; and, to conciliate the latter, he had offered to attack the English. This offer Louis communicated to Edward, who, indignant at the treachery of his recent confederate, sent the letters which he had received from him to the French monarch. Louis was thus furnished with decisive proofs. To the overtures of St. Pol he replied in ambiguous words, the real meaning of which was soon made evident: "I am overwhelmed by so many affairs," said the Machiavelian monarch, "that I have great need of a good head like yours to get through them."

The preparations of the king at length made St. Pol fully aware of his danger. Hesitating as to the measure which in this emergency he ought to adopt, he for a moment half resolved to stand on his defence; but reflection on the superior resources of his enemy persuaded him that he had no chance of success from arms. Yet, had he boldly appealed to the sword, he might, perhaps, have saved his life, or at least have met with an honourable death. He preferred throwing himself on the Duke of Burgundy, whom he tempted by offering him his strong towns as the price of protection. Louis demanded that he should be given up to him; and after some qualms of conscience as to sacrificing a suppliant, who was also his cousin, Charles of Burgundy complied with the demand. St. Pol was conveyed to the Bastile. The French monarch gave him his choice, either to make a full confession, or to be tried in the customary manner. The latter alternative was chosen by the prisoner, who knew not that his letters to Edward and the Duke of Burgundy, were in the king's hands, and therefore believed that there was

not legal evidence to warrant his conviction. His judges sentenced him to lose his head, and he was executed on the 19th of December, 1475.

The last captive in the Bastile, during the reign of Louis the eleventh, or rather the last of whom any record remains—for there were doubtless numbers of the nameless throng—was an Armagnac; a name which seems to have been fatal to its owners. We have seen one Armagnac torn in pieces by the populace, another treacherously slain after the surrender of his stronghold, a third losing his reason in a dungeon, and we are now to witness the leading of a fourth to the scaffold, under circumstances the most horrible.

James of Armagnac, duke of Nemours, was the son of the count de la Marche, who was the governor of the youthful dauphin. When the pupil of the count ascended the throne, he gave his cousin Louisa in marriage to James of Armagnac, and conferred on him the dukedom of Nemours, with all the rights and privileges of the peerage; an honour which had never before been enjoyed by any other than princes of the royal family. Nemours, nevertheless, joined the League of the Public Good. Louis, as we have seen, was obliged to succumb to the League; and, by the consequent peace of Conflans, James of Armagnac obtained the government of Paris and the Isle of France.

Little more than three years elapsed before Nemours was again engaged in intrigues against the monarch. But the time was gone by when revolt could lead to promotion. Louis had strengthened his authority, and he was not disposed to see it set at nought. He, however, pardoned him; but it was on condition that any future offence should render him liable to punishment for the

past, and that he should then be deprived of his privilege of peerage, and be tried as a private individual.

In the course of a few years Nemours once more, and finally, brought down the wrath of the monarch on his head. He was accused of treason, and Beaujeu was despatched to besiege him in the town of Carlat, to which the duke had retired. Carlat was supposed to be impregnable, and it was provisioned for two or three years. Nemours, nevertheless, surrendered without resistance, on condition that his life should be spared; Beaujeu guaranteed this condition, as did likewise Louis le Graville, lord of Montaigu, and Bonfile le Juge, who enjoyed the royal confidence. The wife of the duke, who was confined in child-bed, died of grief and terror, on seeing her husband become a prisoner.

Nemours was conveyed, first, to Pierre-Encise, whence he was removed to the Bastile: where he was subjected to the harshest usage. All his supplications to the king, during two years' abode in the Bastile, were unavailing; or rather, indeed, seem to have tended to irritate him. The duke had, undoubtedly, been a turbulent subject; but nothing can palliate the infamy of the king's conduct, after he had Nemours in his power. It is difficult to account for the inveteracy of his hatred. There was no conceivable violation of justice of which he was not guilty. To have broken the pledge solemnly given by his general was little compared with what followed. Such of the judges as seemed inclined to show mercy were threatened and displaced; others were tempted by being promised to share in the spoils of the prisoner; the place where the court held its sittings was more than once arbitrarily changed: and the decent formalities of the law, as well as its essential principles, were contemptuously discarded. No wonder that Nemours was condemned to death.

But now a scene opens which casts all the rest into shade, and at which nature shudders. Nothing was omitted that could render death terrible to the duke. The chamber where he confessed to the priest was hung with black; the horse which took him to execution was covered with a housing of the same hue. He was already agonised by the thought that his children, who were little more than infants, were reduced to beggary. But this was not enough; a scaffold was expressly constructed for him to suffer on, with wide openings between the planks, and underneath, clad in white, their heads naked, and their hands bound, were placed his children, that they might be drenched with their parent's blood. It was on the 4th of August, 1477, that this horrible tragedy was acted.

Did the brutal vindictiveness of the monarch end here? It did not. The guiltless children, of whom the youngest was only five years old, were taken back to the Bastile, and plunged into a loathsome dungeon, where they had scarcely the power of moving. There they remained, for five years, till the accession of Charles the eighth opened their prison door. A part of the confiscated property of their father was subsequently restored to them by Charles. The health of two of them was so broken that they did not long survive. The youngest inherited the title of Nemours, rose to be viceroy of Naples, and fell at the battle of Cerignoles, in 1503.

CHAPTER III.

Reign of Francis I.—Semblançai—The Chancellor Duprat—The Chancellor Poyet.—Admiral de Chabot.—Fall of Poyet.—Reign of Henry II.—Anne du Bourg.—Louis du Faur.—Reign of Francis II.—Execution of du Bourg.—Francis de Vendôme.—Reign of Charles IX.—The Duke of Lunebourg.—Henry of Navarre and the Prince of Condé in danger of the Bastile.—Faction of the Politicians.—La Mole.—Coconas.—Marshal de Montmorenci.—Marshal de Cossé.—Reign of Henry III.—Bussi d' Amboise.

During the reigns of Charles the eighth and Louis the twelfth, a period of more than thirty years, no prisoners of note appear to have been incarcerated in the Bastile. In the reign of Francis the first, we again find it receiving persons of rank within its gloomy walls. The first who was consigned to it by Francis was James de Beaune, baron of Semblançai. He was the eldest son of John de Beaune, a citizen of Tours, who acquired a large fortune by commerce, and who after having withdrawn from mercantile pursuits, held the office of steward to Louis the eleventh and to Charles the eighth. Semblançai entered early into the royal service, and in the reign of Charles the eighth, rose to the high situation of superintendent of the finances, and retained it under Louis the twelfth and Francis the first. It was to his talents he was indebted for preferment; and his conduct, in the difficult and dangerous post which he occupied, justified his elevation, and gained for him the confidence of the three monarchs. Francis was even accustomed to address him with the flattering appellation of father. Keeping aloof from all court intrigues, he displayed, in his

official character, an exemplary regularity, economy, and probity; and he crowned the whole by a virtue which is still more rare in a finance minister—that of endeavouring to alleviate the burthens of the people, and prevent them from being despoiled by unprincipled nobles.

The man who acted thus was not likely to be without enemies; all the greedy, who were disappointed of thrusting their hands into the public purse, and all the wasteful and corrupt, to whom his example was a stinging rebuke, would of course abhor him. But Semblançai might have set their malice at defiance, had they not found an invincible ally in a female, whose venomous hatred was rendered fatal to him by her unbounded influence.

This powerful female was Louisa of Savoy, duchess of Angoulême, the mother of Francis the first. She was beautiful in person, a doating mother, and endowed with many intellectual qualities of a superior class; but she was immeasurably ambitious, vindictive, and rapacious. Such was her avidity for riches, and such her success in gratifying it, that, at the time of her death, her coffers contained no less than a million and a half of golden crowns—an enormous, not to say disgraceful hoard, especially when we consider what was the value of the sum at that period. In two instances, her criminal passions were the cause of shame and misfortune to France. Of the first of these we are about to speak; the second was her persecution of the Constable de Bourbon—a base and disastrous measure, which was prompted either by resentment for his rejection of her love, or by her eagerness to seize upon his ample domains, or, perhaps, by a combination of both these unworthy motives.

The regard which was manifested for Semblançai by Francis was, at one period, equally felt by the duchess of

Angoulême. There exists, under her hand, the strongest testimony to the rectitude of the superintendent, and of the generous sacrifices which he made to provide for the wants of the state. It was not till the necessity of vindicating his own character compelled him to criminate her, that she became his enemy.

Jealous of the influence possessed by the countess of Chateaubriant, the mistress of Francis, whose brother, Lautrec, was then governor of the Milanese and commander of the French army in that province, the duchess appears to have formed the plan of aiming a deadly blow at the sister through the side of the brother. If, by disabling him from defending the Milanese, she could bring Lautrec into disgrace, it was not improbable that the disgusted and indignant monarch, who set a high value on his Italian conquest, would extend his anger to the countess. The means which she adopted for bringing her scheme to bear, had also an additional and not trivial merit in her eyes; that of contributing to swell the mass of treasure which she had already accumulated.

In the first part of her project, she completely succeeded. Deprived of the pecuniary resources which he had expected from France, and which were the more needful, as the harshness of his government had rendered him unpopular in Italy, Lautrec was defeated at the battle of the Bicocco, was deserted by his Swiss auxiliaries, and at length was driven from the duchy of Milan.

The disgrace thus cast upon the French arms, and that, too, in a country which he in person had won, could not fail to exasperate a young and warlike sovereign. When Lautrec returned to his native land, the king refused to admit him to his presence; but at last, through the intercession of his sister, and of the Constable de Bourbon, the

vanquished general obtained an audience. He was received with a frowning countenance; and he boldly complained of his reception. "Is it possible for me," said Francis, sternly, "to look favourably on a man who is guilty of having lost my duchy of Milan?"

Nowise daunted by this rebuff, Lautrec firmly replied, "I will dare to assert, that your majesty is the sole cause of that loss. For eighteen months your gendarmes had not a single farthing of pay. The Swiss, with whose disposition as to money you are well acquainted, were also left unpaid. It was solely by my management that they were retained for several months with my army. There would have been no reason for wonder had they quitted it without drawing their swords; their respect for me induced them, however, not to desert me till after a sanguinary combat. They compelled me to give battle, though I foresaw clearly that there was no hope of victory; but, in my circumstances, prudence dictated to risk every thing, however little chance there might appear that our efforts would be successful. The whole of my crime amounts to this."

The astonishment of Francis was excited by this speech of Lautrec. "What!" exclaimed he, "did you not receive the four hundred thousand crowns, which I ordered to be sent to you soon after your arrival at Milan?" "No, sire," answered Lautrec; "your majesty's letters came to hand, but no money was forwarded to me; nor did it ever pass the Alps."

Semblançai was immediately summoned into his presence by Francis, to account for such an extraordinary violation of his duty. In his defence, the superintendant stated that the duchess, vested with authority as regent, had demanded from him the four hundred thousand crowns, and that he held her receipt for the sum.

Irritated by this unexpected discovery, Francis hastened to his mother's apartment, and reproached her for conduct which had cost him a part of his dominions. The duchess is said to have begun her reply by a denial of the fact. She was, however, ultimately compelled to own that she had indeed obtained four hundred thousand crowns from Semblançai; but she artfully pretended, that she had previously confided the money to his care, and that it was the produce of savings from her income. Semblançai, on the contrary, strenuously protested that she had never entrusted anything to his keeping, and that when she drew from him the funds in question, he had told her that they were set apart by the king for the service of the forces in Italy.

Francis was no doubt convinced of her guilt, but he could not bear the idea of openly stigmatizing a mother whom he loved. There was consequently nothing to be done but to bury, as far as was possible, the whole transaction in oblivion. Abruptly putting an end to the altercation between the duchess and the superintendant, he said, "Let us think no more on the subject! we did not deserve to conquer; it was in vain that fortune declared on our side; we threw insuperable obstacles in the way of her favour. Let us cease to be traitors to each other, and let us henceforth endeavour to act for the public good, with more wisdom and union than we have hitherto displayed."

That Semblançai continued to hold his place, is a sufficient proof that his assertion was credited by the king. That the revengeful duchess was eager to ruin him, we might easily have believed, even had the result not afforded evidence of the fact. For a considerable time, however, she silently nursed her wrath. It was not till 1524,

when a new expedition was in preparation against the Milanese, that she found an opportunity of striking her blow. Money was wanted; and Semblançai, who had come forward on former occasions, was desired to make an advance from his private fortune. But this he declined to do; pleading, as a reason for his refusal, that a debt of three hundred thousand crowns was already owing to him. He was punished by dismissal from his office—if that can be called a punishment for which he appears to have sought—and, after having given in his accounts, and shown that they were correct, he retired to his estate of Balan, in the neighbourhood of Tours.

On the departure of Francis for Italy, he again appointed his mother to act as regent. She had now unlimited power; and, as far as concerned Semblançai, she exercised it cruelly and basely. She began by instituting against him a suit, to recover a balance which she alleged to be due to her, as part of the pretended deposit. To bolster up her cause, she is accused of having stooped to the most degrading means. Gentil, the confidential clerk of Semblançai, was enamoured of one of her attendants; and this female the regent employed to steal, or obtain by blandishments, the receipt which had been given to the superintendant.

This suit was probably meant to answer the double purpose of narrowing his resources and injuring his character. But this mode of proceeding was "too poor, too weak, for her revenge," and she soon adopted another, which struck directly at his life. His secretary, John Prevost, who seems himself to have had reason for dreading an inquiry into his official conduct, was tampered with, to cause the ruin of his master. Impunity for his own misdoings was to be the price of his new crime. A charge

of peculation was brought against Semblançai, and, towards the close of 1526, he was committed to the Bastile. To render his fate certain, the office of sitting in judgment upon him was entrusted to the Chancellor Duprat, who had been his rival, was still his deadliest foe, and was, besides, a devoted tool of the queen-mother. As his colleagues. or rather accomplices, Duprat selected, from the various parliaments, men on whose subserviency he could rely. From a tribunal thus infamously constituted, not even a semblance of justice could be expected. On the 9th of August, 1527, Semblançai, who was then in his sixty-second year, was condemned to be hanged; and this sentence was, shortly after, executed on him, at the gibbet of Montfaucon.

The popular feeling, with respect to Semblançai, may be considered as at least a strong presumptive proof of his innocence. It is not often that the fall of a finance minister is a subject of sorrow to the multitude. In his case we find one of the few exceptions; for the people beheld his melancholy fate with grief, surprise, and indignation, and they long looked with an evil eye on the malignant princess by whom he was judicially murdered.

There is an apparent but not a real discrepancy in the accounts of the behaviour of Semblançai, when his doom was sealed. From the language of Du Bouchet, who represents him as weeping bitterly, and cherishing hopes of pardon till the last moment, a hasty conclusion might be drawn, that the courage of the victim deserted him. But wounded honour, and a keen sense of the ingratitude with which a life of services was repaid, might well wring tears from his eyes, though his mind remained unmoved by the fear of death. That his firmness was, in fact, not to be shaken, we have the unexceptionable testimony of

Marot, who probably witnessed the calm deportment of Semblançai when going to the scaffold. In his lines, which bear the title of "Du Lieutenant Criminel et de Semblançai," the poet thus forcibly expresses himself—

> "When Maillard, hellish judge, led Semblançai
> On gallows tree to pass from life away,
> Say which of them most undisturbed was seen?"
> "I'll tell you, friend: so blank was Maillard's mien,
> He looked as though he saw the direful dart
> Of death hang o'er him; but so brave a heart
> Semblançai showed, you would have sworn that he
> Was leading Maillard to the gallows tree."

We have seen that the chancellor, Duprat, was the instrument which Louisa of Savoy employed to accomplish the destruction of Semblançai. At an earlier period he had served her as effectually in a similar case. Her suit against the Constable de Bourbon, to strip him of his vast estates, is said to have been suggested by Duprat, and was certainly brought to a favourable issue by the exercise of his influence over the judges. His hatred of the constable was caused, or sharpened, by Bourbon having refused to comply with a request relative to the grant of an estate in Auvergne. Detested by all France, for the fiscal oppressions of which he was the author, and for his having betrayed the liberties of the Gallican church, the chancellor nevertheless retained his power to the last, and died loaded with titles and riches.

Another tool of the duchess of Angoulême, who closely imitated the conduct of Duprat, was not equally fortunate. William Poyet, a native of Angers, born about 1474, had acquired a high reputation at the bar before he was chosen the queen-mother's advocate against the Constable de Bourbon. The manner in which he performed his new task ensured his promotion. He became successively advocate-general, and prèsident-à-mortier, and was em-

ployed in various negotiations; and, at length, in 1538, his ambition was gratified by his appointment to the high office of chancellor. If servility to the monarch, and an utter disregard of the rights and happiness of the people, are qualifications for that office, his fitness cannot be denied. He was undoubtedly worthy of succeeding to Duprat.

The profligate readiness with which Poyet encouraged Francis the first to load his subjects with heavy taxes, drew upon him a severe reproof from Duchatel, the virtuous and benevolent bishop of Orleans. Hearing the chancellor tell the king that his majesty was the master of all that his subjects possessed, the bishop indignantly exclaimed, "Carry such tyrannical maxims to the Caligulas and Neros, and, if you have no respect for yourself, at least respect a monarch who is the friend of humanity, and who knows that to hold its rights sacred is the first of his duties." This speech did honour to the prelate, but there is no ground for believing that it produced any good effect upon either the sovereign or the minister.

It was by female influence that Poyet was raised to his lofty station; it was by the same influence that he was precipitated from it. Two parties existed at court, those of the dauphin and the duke of Alençon, the heads of which were the constable de Montmorenci and the admiral de Chabot. Besides the hatred which he felt against Chabot as a political rival, the haughty Montmorenci found, in the unceremonious tone of equality with which he was addressed by the admiral, another reason for hating him. To ruin an enemy by underhand measures, was the natural proceeding of a courtier. He insinuated to the king that Chabot had acquired his riches by iniquitous practices; and, by holding out the lure of a cardinal's hat,

he induced Poyet to assist in Chabot's destruction. The chancellor exerted himself so strenuously in raking up matter of accusation against the intended victim, that he at length produced five-and-twenty charges, each of which, he declared, would subject the delinquent to capital punishment. The alleged criminality of Chabot was soon made known to the king.

It is probable, nevertheless, that remembering the services of Chabot, and the friendship which had existed ever since their youthful days, Francis would have overlooked the supposed crimes, had he not been provoked by a speech which sounded like defiance. Some trifling dispute occurring between them, he threatened to bring him to trial; to which Chabot boldly replied, that a trial had no terrors for him, his conduct having always been so irreproachable that neither his life nor his honour could be put in danger. Francis was weak enough to take offence at this implied challenge; he committed the offender to the castle of Melun, and directed the chancellor to prosecute him.

Poyet rushed upon his prey with the ferocity of a hungry tiger. He began by selecting the commissioners who were to sit in judgment on Chabot; and, to ensure their obedience, he himself, contrary to established custom, presided over them. Yet, with such instruments, and in spite of all his unprincipled efforts to spur them on, he was not able fully to accomplish his purpose. So groundless were the articles of impeachment, there being only two of them which at all, and those but slightly, affected the prisoner, that, instead of voting for death, the judges were disposed either to acquit him, or, at most, to pass a lenient sentence. By dint, however, of threats, the chancellor compelled them to go far beyond their intention;

they consequently condemned Chabot to a fine of fifteen thousand livres, confiscation of property and perpetual exile. One of them is said to have added to his signature the Latin word *vi*, in almost imperceptible characters; thus signifying that force had been used to extort his consent. Not content with the daring contempt of justice which he had already displayed, Poyet, in drawing up the judgment of the court, did not hesitate to falsify it, by inserting additional crimes, and aggravating the penalty.

Though Francis was irritated by the honourable boldness of Chabot, he had never intended to carry matters to extremity against him. He could not now avoid being astonished that the charges had dwindled into such utter insignificance, and that nevertheless a sentence of such undue severity was pronounced; and he appears to have been also warmly solicited in his behalf by a prevailing advocate, the Duchess of Etampes, the royal mistress, who was a relation of Chabot. Yet though the king designed to receive the admiral again into favour, he could not deny himself the mean gratification of taunting him. "Well," said he to him, "will you again boast of your innocence?" "Sire," replied Chabot, "I have but too well learned, that before God and his sovereign no man must call himself innocent; but I have one consolation, that all the malice of my enemies has failed to convict me of having ever been unfaithful to your majesty." Chabot was pardoned, and reinstated in his offices. This tardy justice came too late; though his enemies had been unable to drag him to the scaffold, they had succeeded in shortening his days. In little more than twelve months, his existence was terminated by a disease, seemingly of the heart, which was brought on by the grief and anxiety that he had suffered.

Chabot, however, lived long enough to witness the downfall of his adversaries. To Montmerenci the king intimated, that he had no longer occasion for his services; and the dismissed courtier in consequence retired to Chantilly, whence he did not emerge during the remainder of Francis's reign. A heavier misfortune awaited Poyet, and it speedily fell upon him. Two females, the Duchess of Etampes and the Queen of Navarre, were the foes who overthrew him. The duchess, who was already offended by his persecution of her relative, he exasperated beyond measure, by refusing to perform an illegal act in favour of one of her friends; the Queen of Navarre he alienated in a similar manner; and he rendered both of them more inveterate, by some bitter remarks on the influence which females possessed over the mind of the sovereign. They combined together for his ruin, and they effected it. In August, 1542, he was dragged from his bed, and carried to the Bastile. Thus, after having been allowed to be unjust with impunity, he was punished for recollecting at last that he had duties to perform. In this emergency, he had the mingled audacity and meanness to write to Chabot, imploring his forgiveness and protection. After having been three years in prison, he was declared incapable of ever holding office, and was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, and to pay a fine of a hundred thousand livres. The king himself, with a strange want of decorum, came forward as a witness against him on the trial. Poyet died in 1548, an object of general contempt.

The captives, to whom our attention is now to be directed, were of a very different character from the chancellor Poyet; they were sufferers for conscience' sake; men who, when the question related to religious interests, deemed it a duty not to submit in silence to

arbitrary power. Their names were Anne du Bourg, and Louis du Faur, and they were counsellors of the parliament at Paris. The uncle of du Bourg was chancellor in the reign of Francis I. Du Faur was of a family which had produced many eminent characters, among whom is to be numbered Guy du Faur, lord of Pibrac, author of the well-known Quatrains.

Pressed, it is said, by the Guises, and by the duchess of Valentinois, his mistress, the latter of whom was looking forward to the benefit she might expect from confiscations, Henry the second unwisely resolved to carry to the full extent the persecution of the Protestants. Hitherto, only the humbler classes had been marked out for punishment; but as nothing more than the mere pleasure of tormenting could be derived from pursuing them, it was now determined that men of higher rank should suffer in their turn. This was at least impartial injustice. It was believed that the reformed doctrines had many partisans among the magistracy; and the members of the parliament of Paris were therefore selected as the subjects upon whom the new experiment of rigour should be first tried. This step was taken at the suggestion of le Maître, the chief president, who had the baseness to deliver privately to the king a list of his protestant colleagues, and also a tempting statement of the property which they possessed.

It was a custom of the heads of the parliament to meet at stated periods, for the purpose, among other things, of inquiring into any alleged neglect or violation of duty on the part of the members. These meetings, which were established by an edict of Charles VIII., were called the Mercuriales, from the circumstance of their taking place on a Wednesday. To one of these assemblies, while it was in the midst of a debate on the measures which ought

to be adopted with respect to heretics, the king suddenly came, without any previous notice, accompanied by the Guises, and other rigidly catholic nobles, and guarded by a formidable escort.

Previously to his arrival, the balance of opinion had inclined to the side of a lenient administration of the law, until the discipline of the church had been reformed by a new œcumenical council. Though the monarch affected to be calm, it was easy to perceive that he was under the influence of passion. He made a vehement harangue, in which he dwelt on the disturbances caused by sectaries, and on the necessity of defending the church, and then ordered the members to resume the debate, and promised them freedom of speech.

The promise was meant only as a snare. The manner in which the king had come to the sitting, in open contempt of usage and even of decorum, plainly showed that his intention was to intimidate. But, by pretending to guarantee the privilege of freely speaking, he hoped to do away the impression which his abrupt coming had made, and delude the speakers into a disclosure of their real sentiments. There were some, perhaps, who confided in his word; there were others who, doubtless, were aware that no reliance was to be placed on it, but who, nevertheless, thought they were called upon to maintain, at all hazards, what they deemed to be the cause of religion and truth. Of the latter class were Anne du Bourg and Louis du Faur.

Du Faur admitted that troubles arose in the state from the difference of religions, but he contended that it ought to be inquired who was really the author of those troubles; and with a manifest allusion to the king, he added, that if this were done, the same reply might perhaps be made

as was given on a similar occasion by the prophet Elijah to Ahab, "I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim."

The speech of du Bourg, though it seemed to be less directly personal to the monarch, was as well calculated as that of du Faur to excite angry feelings in Henry, and in many of the hearers, on whose vices it made a rude attack. There were men, he said, whose blasphemies, adulteries, horrible debaucheries, and repeated perjuries, crimes worthy of the worst death, were not merely overlooked, but shamefully encouraged, while every day new punishments were invented for men who were irreproachable. "For of what crime can they be accused?" exclaimed he. "Can they be charged with high treason, they who never mention the sovereign but in the prayers which they offer up for him? Who can say that they violate the laws of the state, endeavour to shake the fidelity of the towns, or incite the provinces to revolt? With all the pains that have been taken, not even with witnesses picked out for the purpose, has it been possible to convict them of having so much as thought of these things. No! All their fault and misfortune is that, by means of the light of the Holy Scriptures, they have discovered and revealed the shameless turpitude of the Papal power, and have demanded a salutary reformation. This is their sedition."

When all the members had delivered their opinions, some of which were favourable to mild measures, the king called for the register, in which were inscribed the opinions of those who had spoken before his arrival, and also on a previous day. He then addressed to the assembly another speech of censure and menace, and ended by ordering

the arrest of du Bourg and du Faur, who were present, and likewise of six absent members. The two former were conveyed to the Bastile, where du Bourg, and probably du Faur also, were shut up in a cage. Three of the others escaped; the rest were sent to other places of confinement.

This arbitrary act was the last which Henry had the power of committing. On that day fortnight, at a tournament, he was mortally wounded by a splinter from the lance of the Count de Montgomery. The scene of the tournament was near the Bastile; and it is said as the wounded monarch was carried past the prison, his conscience smote him, and he more than once expressed his fears that he had behaved unjustly to men who were innocent. The cardinal of Lorraine, who was with him, is also said to have assured him, that such an idea could have been inspired only by the arch-fiend, and admonished him to reject it, and adhere firmly to his faith. This story, however, has no other foundation than popular report.

The reign of Francis II. opened under no favourable auspices for the protestants. The minor king was wholly under the influence of the Guises, and of his mother Catherine of Medicis, all of whom had avowed a deadly hostility to them. The persecution was accordingly resumed with an increase of vigour. The trial of the members of the parliament was pushed on; but it was against du Bourg that the hatred of the court was peculiarly directed—the sweeping crimination, which was contained in his speech before the deceased Henry, had wounded many great personages too deeply to be forgiven.

Before the death of Henry, a commission had been appointed, which had interrogated du Bourg on the sub-

ject of his religious tenets. He having candidly avowed them, they were pronounced heretical by the bishop of Paris, and he was delivered over to the secular authority. Du Bourg appealed to the Archbishop of Sens, and to the parliament, but without effect. The trial was proceeded with, and, while it was pending, an event occurred, which contributed to render his enemies still more inveterate. One of his judges was a counsellor named Minard, a man of profligate life, who had given violent advice to the late king. Du Bourg, therefore, repeatedly challenged him as incompetent to sit upon the trial, and, on Minard refusing to withdraw, the prisoner is said to have exclaimed, "God will know how to compel thee!" It unfortunately happened that, returning one evening to his home from the trial, Minard was assassinated by a pistol being fired at him. Du Bourg was suspected, and not without an appearance of reason, of being implicated in the murder, and this hastened his fate. There is no ground whatever to believe that he was concerned in the foul deed; but it must be owned, that such prophecies as he ventured upon are dangerous, because they have a tendency to bring about their own fulfilment. It is not improbable, that the act was suggested to the mind of some fanatical Protestant by the words of the prisoner.

It was in vain that the Elector Palatine wrote to the French monarch, to entreat him to spare the life of du Bourg, and that numerous eminent persons, even Catholics, solicited to the same effect. Neither their intercession, nor his acknowledged integrity and pure morals, availed to save him. He was condemned to be hanged, and his body burnt, at the Place de Grêve. He died at the age of thirty-eight, with a calm heroism, and Christian spirit of forgiveness, which excited general

admiration. His death, far from being beneficial to the Catholic cause, was exceedingly injurious to it. The Protestants regarded him as a martyr, gloried in him as an honour to their party and faith, and were not slow in taking a heavy vengeance for his untimely doom.

The blood of du Bourg seems to have deadened the fire of persecution, as far as related to the other parliamentary prisoners. Some were subjected to little more than nominal punishments; and even du Faur, the most obnoxious of them, was only condemned to pay a fine, ask pardon, and be suspended from his judicial functions for five years. But, comparatively light as this sentence was, du Faur refused to acquiesce in it; he boldly protested against it, and after a hard struggle, he was fortunate enough to obtain its revocation, and to be re-established in his magisterial capacity. Nor does it appear that this victory was purchased by any sacrifice of principle.

Among those who, during the new crusade against Protestants, had to lament the loss of liberty, was Francis de Vendôme, Vidame of Chartres, allied to the princes of the blood and the potent house of Montmorenci. Vendôme had served in Italy, as a volunteer, under the Duke of Aumale, and subsequently held a command there under the Duke of Guise, after which he was appointed governor of Calais. Closely connected with the house of Montmorenci, he was irritated beyond measure by the dismissal of the constable, and cherished a deadly animosity against the Guises, who were the authors of that measure. It is not wonderful that, under the influence of these feelings, he should make common cause with the Prince of Condé and the King of Navarre, who were preparing for resistance to the court. Vendôme took an active part

in rousing the Protestants to arms in various parts of the kingdom. But some of his letters to the Prince of Condé having been found upon la Sague, an emissary of the Protestant party, he was arrested and sent to the Bastile. There he was treated with extreme rigour, and was refused permission to see his wife, though she offered to become a prisoner with him. The letters were in appearance merely complimentary, but the dread of the torture induced la Sague to disclose that important secrets were written with sympathetic ink on the cover that contained them. The death of Francis II. and the pretended reconcilement of the hostile parties on the accession of Charles IX., would have saved Vendôme from the scaffold, but he did not live to recover his freedom. Worn out by a life of dissipation, he died in his thirty-eighth year, at the Tournelles, to which prison he had been removed from the Bastile.

The decease of Vendôme took place in 1560; and, for several years, with the exception of the Duke of Lunebourg, who was imprisoned for a quarrel with the Duke of Guise, no prisoner, at least none whose fate history has thought worthy of recording, appears to have found an abode within the walls of the Bastile. After the horrible massacre of St. Bartholomew, there was a moment when the fortress seemed about to receive a princely captive. The King of Navarre (afterwards Henry IV.) had yielded to the threats of the royal murderer, and had changed his religion; but the Prince of Condé was made of sterner stuff. He resisted so firmly all attempts to induce him to apostatise, that Charles IX. ordered him to be brought before him, and, in a furious tone, addressed to him three ominous words; "The mass, death, or the Bastile." Condé held out a little longer,

but he yielded when he found that du Rosier, a famous Protestant minister, had been converted to the Catholic faith.

It was not till towards the close of the reign of Charles IX. that the Bastile was again tenanted. That monarch was then sinking rapidly into the grave, under the pressure of bodily disease, and the perpetual stings of his conscience. Haunted by appalling dreams, and by direful spectres and dismal sounds, which his fancy incessantly conjured up, he had fallen into a state which scarcely the remembrance of his crimes can prevent us from pitying. It was at this period that the party was formed which adopted the appellations of Politicians and Malcontents. The first of these names was chosen to show that the persons assuming it were not actuated, like the Protestants, by religious motives. The oppressive weight of the taxes, the insolent licentiousness of the soldiery, and the cruelty and flagrant incapacity of those who managed the public affairs, were their grounds of complaint. At the head of this party, which soon became considerable, were William de Montmorenci and his nephew, the Viscount de Turenne. Though this party consisted of Catholics, yet as among the objects which it sought to obtain there were many which the Protestants no less eagerly desired, it was not long before a coalition was formed between them.

To give greater weight and consistence to the party, it was thought advisable to provide for it a chief of a more elevated rank than Montmorenci and Turenne. The Duke of Alençon, one of the king's brothers, who is known in English history as the Duke of Anjou, was the chosen individual. With many defects, and a scanty share of virtues, he had some qualifications for being

head of the party. To the Protestants he was recommended by his being far less hostile than the rest of his family, and by his having been an unalterable friend of the murdered Admiral Coligni. Alençon was irritated by the restraint, little short of imprisonment, under which he was kept at court, and by the refusal to confer on him the lieutenant-generalship of the kingdom, which had been held by his brother Henry; and was consequently not averse from joining those who could contribute to gratify his ambition. It has, indeed, been supposed, and the supposition is by no means improbable, that the party, or at least the protestant branch of it, would have been willing to raise him to the throne, to the exclusion of Henry, his elder brother.

Two of the principal agents in forwarding the design of the malcontents were la Mole, and the Count de Coconas, the favourites of the Duke of Alençon. La Mole was an officer, a native of Provence. Among the ladies of the court he was much admired for his liveliness and companionable qualities. His time was divided not quite equally, between sinning and hearing mass; the latter of which he attended three or four times a day. It was said of him by the king, that whoever wished to keep a register of la Mole's debaucheries, need only reckon up his masses. He was notoriously one of the gallants of Margaret of Valois, as Coconas was of the Duchess of Nevers, the eldest of three sisters, who were called the Graces. Coconas was one of the many Italians who were attracted into France by the hope of receiving patronage from Catherine of Medicis. One anecdote will suffice to demonstrate the fiendishness of his nature. During the massacre of St. Bartholomew, he bought from the populace thirty Huguenot prisoners, that he

might gratify himself, by subjecting them to torture both of body and mind. After having, by a promise of saving their lives, induced them to renounce their faith, he put them slowly to death by numerous superficial dagger wounds. Of this act he was accustomed to boast. The fate of such a man can excite no pity.

All was arranged for the flight of the Duke of Alençon, the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé from the court, in order to join the malcontents, and hoist the standard of opposition. Bands of troops were hovering round the palace of St. Germain, to protect their retreat. But the plot was disconcerted by the vigilance of Catherine of Medicis, the imprudence of some of the plotters, and the hesitation of the feeble-minded duke. At two in the morning, Catherine hurried the dying Charles from St. Germain to Paris in a litter, and placed guards over the duke and the King of Navarre. Condé, more prudent than his associates, had embraced the first opportunity to escape. There were some ludicrous circumstances connected with the hasty retreat to Paris. "The cardinals of Bourbon, Lorrain, and Guise," says d'Aubigné, "the chancellor Birague, and Morvilliers and Bellièvre, were all mounted on Italian coursers, grasping with both hands their saddle-bows, and as thoroughly frightened at their horses as at the enemy." Contrasting strongly with this was the pitiable state of the monarch, with his frame debilitated, and all the weight of the St. Bartholomew on his soul, groaning, and mournfully exclaiming, "At least they might have waited till I was dead."

Indignant at what he called a foul conspiracy, the king ordered that a rigid inquiry should instantly be commenced. La Mole denied every thing; Coconas, on the contrary, disclosed all that he knew, and perhaps more.

But the fate of the conspirators was sealed by the Duke of Alençon, who made an ample confession, without even having attempted to stipulate for the lives of his confederates. Coconas and la Mole, who had been sent to the Bastile, were now brought to trial; and, by dint of legal sophistry, the project of bringing about the flight of the princes was construed into a design against the person of the king.

Coconas and la Mole were condemned to be put to the torture and then beheaded. "Poor la Mole!" exclaimed the latter, while he was suffering the first part of his sentence, "is there no way to obtain a pardon? The duke, my master, to whom I owe innumerable obligations, commanded me on my life to say nothing of what he was about to do. I answered, Yes, sir, if you do nothing against the king." The unfortunate man, like vast numbers at that period, had faith in magic arts. A waxen image, of which the heart was pierced through with a needle, had been found among his effects. On being questioned whether this was not meant to represent the king, and to be an instrument of tormenting his majesty, he replied that its only purpose was to inspire love in a lady of whom he was deeply enamoured.

On the scaffold, before he laid down his head on the block, he significantly said to the by-standers, "You see, sirs, that the little ones are caught, and that the great ones, who have been guilty of the fault, are allowed to escape." La Mole displayed his ruling passion strong in death. His last words, after having prayed to God and the Virgin, were, "commend me to the kind remembrance of the Queen of Navarre and the ladies." He was not forgotten by his lady-love; neither was his companion. Queen Margaret and the Duchess of Nevers are said by

some to have embalmed the heads of their admirers, that they might always preserve them for contemplation; while by others they are asserted to have taken them in a carriage to a chapel, at the foot of Montmartre, and buried them with their own hands. Two years afterwards, the sentences against la Mole and Coconas were annulled by Henry III.

The abortive plot in favour of the Duke of Alençon proved a source of trouble to two individuals, more eminent in rank, and far more estimable in character, than were la Mole and Coconas. The marshals Francis de Montmorenci, and Arthur de Cossé, the former of whom was the eldest son of the celebrated constable, were suspected, or pretended to be so, by the queen-mother; Montmorenci was also well known to feel that hatred of the Guises which was characteristic of his family. At her suggestion, therefore, they were committed to the Bastile, by Charles IX. This was nearly the last exercise of his authority. He died about a fortnight after, leaving his mother to hold the office of regent, till his successor, the third Henry, could return from Poland.

Montmorenci was the husband of Diana, the natural daughter of Henry II., and had been employed on numerous occasions, civil and military, in all of which he had honourably acquitted himself. Of his martial exploits the most prominent was the brave though unsuccessful defence of Terouane. He was liberal, high-minded, learned, firm, and of invariable rectitude: Cossé was still more illustrious in arms than his fellow-prisoner. He had distinguished himself at various sieges, particularly those of Sens and Metz, and in the battle of St. Denis, and many other encounters. Nor was he a mere enterprising soldier. It is said of him by contemporary historians,

and it is no light praise, "that his head was as good as his arm."

The party which had hitherto been known as that of the Politicians now took the name of the Third Party. It received a large increase, by the junction of Catholics, whose indignation was excited by the constraint put upon the Duke of Alençon and the King of Navarre, at Vincennes, and the close imprisonment of two such eminent men as de Montmorenci and de Cossé. Condé, too, was busy in Germany, stirring up the Protestant princes to succour his friends, and keeping up a continual correspondence with the French Calvinists.

On his taking possession of the throne, Henry set at liberty the King of Navarre and the Duke of Alençon. The marshals, however, were still retained in confinement. Diana, the wife of Montmorenci, had adopted a singular mode of moving in her husband's behalf the feelings of the monarch. Dressed in deep mourning, and followed by all her female attendants in the same garb, she met Henry as he was passing through the street, fell at his feet, and intreated him to take compassion on her husband, whose health was declining in a prison, into which he had been thrown without being convicted, or so much as accused, of any crime. She likewise forcibly urged that, even if his majesty supposed him to be guilty, he ought to grant him a fair trial. The king seemed to be affected by her appeal, which was backed by some of the nobles who were present; and he promised to inquire into the business with as little delay as possible.

The promise of the king, however, if sincere at the moment, was soon disregarded. Cossé, who, like his fellow-captive, was suffering from bad health, was, indeed, allowed to take up his abode in his own house, under a

guard; but the only deliverance which was destined for Montmorenci was deliverance from all the troubles of this world. It appears, in fact, that his life would not have been safe for a moment, but for the salutary fear that his death would drive into open hostility his brother Damville, who held the government of Languedoc. A report having been spread that Damville was dead, the king resolved to have the marshal strangled in prison; and, as a preliminary step, it was industriously given out that he was subject to apoplectic attacks. This barbarous and cowardly scheme would have been carried into effect, had not an obstacle occurred. Giles de Souvré, who had been mistakenly selected to perform the assassin's part, chanced to be a more honest man than his royal master, and he purposely interposed so many delays, that time was afforded to ascertain the falsehood of the report which had announced the death of Damville.

It was neither to the clemency nor the justice of his sovereign that Montmorenci was ultimately indebted for the recovery of his freedom. Endangered by the betrayal of a plot into which he had entered against his brother, Alençon mustered up courage enough to run away. His flight took place on the 16th of September, 1575. As soon as he was in safety at Dreux, he issued a manifesto, not unartfully contrived, to gain partisans in various quarters. Reform in every department was the tempting burden of its song. It worked its intended effect; the Protestants were in raptures, the Third Party was satisfied with it, and he speedily found himself in a situation to set the court at defiance.

William, one of the brothers of Montmorenci, whom we have seen one of the original chiefs of the Politicians, was now about to enter the French territory at the head of a

division of troops, designed to herald the way to the army which the Prince of Condé had succeeded in obtaining from the Elector Palatine. In the first outbreak of her anger, on hearing this news, the queen-mother sent him word that, if he dared to advance, she would despatch to him the heads of the two marshals. His reply was, "Should the queen do as she threatens, there is nothing of hers in France on which I will not leave the marks of my revenge."

Menace having failed, the wily Catherine resorted to an opposite mode of proceeding. Aware that the liberation of the two marshals would be imperatively demanded by their armed friends, and that the king was too weak to refuse it, she determined to try whether she could not secure their gratitude, by appearing to have the merit of voluntarily releasing them. They were accordingly restored to liberty. By a declaration, under the royal seal, Montmorenci was pronounced to be "absolutely innocent of the crime which had been laid to his charge." When a similar exculpatory document was offered to Cossé by the king, he chivalrously replied, "Excuse me, sire, for declining it; a Cossé ought to think that no one can believe him to be guilty."

Though they could not be ignorant of the motive which had induced Catherine to throw open their prison doors, the marshals acted as if a favour had really been granted to them. Montmorenci had the largest share in bringing about the truce, and the subsequent treaty, between the king and the Duke of Alençon; and the loyalty of Cossé was considered to be so unimpeachable that, in 1578, he received the order of the Holy Ghost. Montmorenci died in 1579; Cossé in 1582.

The principal favourite of the Duke of Alençon, after

the death of la Mole and Coconas, was Louis de Clermont, better known by the appellation of Bussy d' Amboise. In profligacy he went beyond his predecessors. He seems to have been a compound of vices, without a single virtue; unless, indeed, we may give the name of virtue to mere brutal courage. Full of pride and insolence, eager to involve others in deadly quarrels, a libertine, a professed duellist, and a cold-blooded assassin, his being tolerated at the French court, and even admired by many persons, is an unrefutable evidence of the wretched state of morals among the nobility of France. Bravery must have been held in a sort of idolatrous estimation, when respect for it could induce such a man as Crillon to be the friend of d'Amboise.

The first achievement which Bussy is known to have performed stamps his name with infamy. He was engaged in a law-suit against the Marquis of Renel, one of his relations, to recover from him the marquisate, which Bussy claimed as his right. The marquis had come to Paris, with the King of Navarre, and was there when the massacre of St. Bartholomew took place. In the midst of the carnage, Bussy sought him out, and stabbed him to the heart. The parliament, soon after, passed a decree, admitting the murderer's claim; but it is consolatory to find that the decree was subsequently annulled.

Having attached himself to the Duke of Alençon, he was entrusted with the government of the castle of Angers, and he soon made himself universally hated, by his extortion and tyranny. When he visited the court with his master, his arrogance and audacity rose to such a height, that the king's favourites, whom he had often insulted, at length formed a scheme to assassinate him. The attack was made at night, and with superior num-

bers; but it was foiled by the skill and resolution of Bussy and his followers.

The monarch himself was not safe from the contemptuous sarcasms of Bussy. In their dress, Henry and his minions carried to the most extravagant length the costly and absurd fashions of that period. Bussy one day attended his patron at court. He himself was simply dressed, but he was followed by six pages, clad in cloth of gold, and tricked out in the most approved style of finery. That the point of this silent satire might not be lost, he insultingly proclaimed aloud, that "the time was come when ragamuffins would make the most show!" The king was so irritated by this language, that, for a while, the duke was obliged to forbid Bussy from appearing in his train.

About the same time, Bussy gave fresh cause of offence to the king. Ever seeking an opportunity to indulge his passion for duelling, he had wantonly quarrelled with a gentleman named St. Phal. Looking at some embroidery, St. Phal remarked that the letter X was worked on it; Bussy, from sheer contradiction, asserted that the letter was a Y. A duel of six against six in consequence took place, and Bussy was slightly wounded. As, however, Bussy sent his antagonist a second challenge, and expressed a stubborn determination to follow up the quarrel to the last extremity, the king interposed to put an end to it. Bussy reluctantly consented to meet St. Phal, in the king's presence, for the purpose of reconcilement, and when, with that intent, he went to the Louvre, he was accompanied into the palace by a band of two hundred determined partisans. The anger of the king was excited by this irruption of bravoes, but for the present he restrained it.

In one of those fits of suspecting his brother, with which Henry was occasionally seized, he went by night to put him under arrest, and, at the same time, he sent Bussy to the Bastile. On the following morning, a council was held, at which, prompted by the queen-mother, the ministers declared that the step which the king had taken was impolitic, and advised him to be reconciled with the duke. Henry consented. The only stipulation which he made was, that Bussy, on being liberated, should be reconciled to Caylus, the king's favourite, with whom he was at enmity. Bussy complied, and, in complying, contrived to throw ridicule on the weak monarch. "Sire," said he, "if you wish me to kiss him, I am quite ready to do it;" then, suiting the action to the word, he embraced Caylus in such a thoroughly farcical style, that the spectators were unable to repress their laughter.

It was not long before the libertinism of Bussy supplied Henry with the means of destroying him. It is probable that, in his amours, the pleasure of betraying the women who confided in him formed one of the greatest inducements to pursue them—a base feeling, which is still prevalent. In a letter to the Duke of Anjou, he boasted that he had been spreading his nets for the Great Huntsman's beast, and that he held her fast in them. The Great Huntsman was the Count de Montsoreau, who held that office; the beast, as she was politely called, was the count's wife, whom the profligate writer had seduced. This letter Anjou put into the king's hands, as a good jest. Henry kept it, and communicated it to the count, whom he urged to revenge himself on the offender. Montsoreau was not backward to follow the king's advice. He hurried home, and compelled his wife to write to Bussy, to make an assignation with him. Bussy was

true to the appointment. Instead, however, of meeting the countess, he was attacked by Montsoreau and several men, all of whom wore coats of mail. In spite of the odds against him, he fought for some time with determined spirit; but, finding that he must eventually be overpowered, he tried to escape through the window, and was slain by a stab in the back. "The whole province," says de Thou, "was delighted at his fall, and even the Duke of Anjou was not very sorry to be rid of a man who began to be a burthen to him."

CHAPTER IV.

Reign of Henry III. continued—Conspiracy of Salcede—Francis de Rosières—Peter de Belloy—Francis le Breton—Bernard Palissy—Daring plots of the League—Henry III. expelled from Paris—The Bastile surrenders to Guise—Bussi le Clerc appointed governor—Damours—James de la Guesle—Reign of Henry IV.—Members of the parliament arrested—President de Harlay – Potier de Blancmesnil—The family of Seguier—Speeches of Henry IV.—Louis Seguier—James Gillot—Outrage committed by the Council of Sixteen—It is punished by the Duke of Mayenne—Henry IV. enters Paris—Surrender of the Bastile—Du Bourg—Treasure deposited in the Bastile by Henry.

It was a conspiracy against the Duke of Anjou, and the King of France, that brought the next prisoner of importance to the Bastile. This conspiracy originated with the Guises, was promoted by that great artisan of mischief Philip the Second of Spain, and contained the seminal principle of the subsequent war, which is known as the war of the League. The agent employed in carrying it on was Nicholas Salcede, a man of daring and profligate character, whose father, a Spanish gentleman, the governor of Vic, in Lorraine, having offended the Guises, was slain, though he was a catholic, in the massacre of St. Bartholomew. By dint, however, of heaping favours and attentions on him, the Guises, to whom, indeed, he was distantly related, soon induced Salcede to forget the murder of his parent. By a crowning act of kindness, they, in some measure, acquired a right to his services. Conterfeiting the king's coin, as well as that of foreign states, was a crime which, for a long series of years, was of common occurrence in France

among persons of rank. The punishment of throwing them into boiling oil was insufficient to deter them; for it was so often evaded that it ceased to create terror. Salcede had carried the practice of coining to such an extent as to be able to purchase an estate. Being detected, he was summoned to take his trial at Rouen, and, as he prudently refused to appear, sentence of death was passed upon him as a contumacious criminal. But the Duke of Lorraine interceded for him, and his pardon was granted. This, and the prospect of honours and rewards, linked him firmly to the Guises.

The Duke of Anjou was, at this period, struggling to acquire the sovereignty of the Netherlands, and under his banner were arrayed an immense number of the French nobles. To the members of the house of Lorraine he was inveterately hostile; for he looked upon them as his personal enemies, and as having been authors of the many mortifications which he had undergone. To prevent him from entering France, for the purpose of succouring his brother Henry, was, therefore, an object of primary importance; as, if that were not attained, their project of dethroning the king, or at least becoming viceroys over him, could scarcely hope for success. Morality was, in those days, at so low an ebb among the great, that it is probable the Guises would have felt but few scruples in accomplishing their purpose by the death of the duke; though, avowedly, their sole aim was to shut him out of France, by closing against him the northern frontier and the ports of Brittany.

The daring spirit and desperate situation of Salcede—for he was deeply involved in debt—pointed him out to the Guises as a fit instrument. The Duke of Guise tempted him by a solemn assurance, that the King of

Spain would reward him with rank and occupation proportioned to the magnitude of his services; and he backed his arguments and promises by descanting on the benefit which the catholic religion would derive from ruining the Duke of Anjou. His eloquence prevailed, and Salcede unreluctantly devoted himself to the furtherance of the treasonable scheme.

It was arranged, that the Guises should secretly furnish funds for raising a regiment, to be commanded by Salcede, and that he should then proceed to the Duke of Anjou, and offer to bring to his banner a chosen body of men, who would engage to remain under it for several months. No doubt was entertained that, as the duke was scantily provided with money, was, in consequence, daily deserted by some of his troops, and had no great confidence in the Belgians, he would gladly accept this offer; and would either intrust the new corps with the keeping of some important fortress, or reserve it as a guard for his own person. In either case, the conspirators could turn the circumstance to account. The seizure of Dunkirk and Cambray were the main points to which Salcede's attention was to be directed; but he was also to do his best to shake the fidelity of Anjou's officers, and, of course, was to act as spy for the Spanish monarch. The Prince of Parma, meanwhile, was gradually to approach Calais, the governor of which town, it is said, had promised to betray his trust. The sudden loss of Calais would, it was imagined, so terrify Henry, that he would give the supreme command of his forces to the Duke of Guise; the French accomplices of the Guises would then rise in arms; and the plan of subverting the government would be easily executed.

As had been expected, the proposal of Salcede was

listened to with much pleasure by the Duke of Anjou, who treated him as a valuable friend. The duke was as yet ignorant that the conspirator had been reconciled to the Guises. Nor was he aware that, in his way to Bruges, Salcede had visited the enemy's camp, had a conference with the prince of Parma, the viceroy, and been accompanied to Bruges by two of the prince's agents. But the sharp-sighted prince of Orange was not disposed to grant his confidence to the new-comer so readily as the duke; he disliked and suspected him, both as being in his origin a Spaniard, and as having been found guilty of an infamous offence. The inquiries of the prince of Orange elicited sufficient evidence to justify his suspicion that Salcede had sinister designs, and he, therefore, advised the duke to arrest him. This advice was followed by Anjou, who had already learned, from another quarter, that his pretended partisan was connected with the Guises. Salcede was accordingly arrested on his coming to the palace. The two agents of the Prince of Parma were waiting at the palace gate for their confederate's return; one of them escaped, the other, Francis Baza by name, was seized and committed to prison. In the course of a few days, Baza put an end to his existence.

In the first examination, mysterious hints were all that could be drawn from Salcede; in the second, he spontaneously disclosed so complicated and gigantic a conspiracy, that his hearers were astounded. That part of it which related to Belgium and the Duke of Anjou was the smallest part; a mere episode in the Guisian Iliad. The conspirators purposed nothing less than to imprison the King of France, exterminate the royal family, and subject the kingdom to the domination of Spain. Their means Salcede stated to be immense. As implicated in the plot,

he named a multitude of the most powerful nobles, a majority of the governors of provinces and towns, and even some of the king's ministers and favourites. The provinces of Picardy, Champagne, Burgundy, Brittany, and the Cotentin, were, he said, secured by the plotters; nor would foreign aid be wanting, as the papal and Piedmontese troops were to enter France on the side of Lyons, while two Spanish armies were to pass the Pyrenees into Bearn and Gascony, where the malcontents were in readiness to receive them. This deposition, after a lapse of some days, he voluntarily repeated and enlarged, and he offered to prove it, by being confronted with three persons whom he had before mentioned, and who, he was convinced, would confess that he had spoken but the truth.

This disclosure was of too much importance to Henry of France to admit of delay in making it known to him. The Duke of Anjou accordingly despatched one of his chamberlains to Paris, with the depositions, and a letter, in which tbe Guises were not spared. At first, Henry was startled at the seeming danger; but his natural dislike of business, and his love of pleasure, soon induced him to take refuge in the idea that the whole was an invention of some one who wished to disturb his quiet, or a stratagem of his brother, to obtain liberal succours. Not so thought his minister Bellièvre, in whom he placed great confidence. While the minister perused the paper, the changes in his countenance plainly showed that he thought the plot was real, and the peril from it extreme. It was at length settled, that Bellièvre, accompanied by Brulart, one of the secretaries of state, should proceed to Bruges, interrogate Salcede, and require that the criminal should be transferred to Paris. "If," said the king "my brother consents to the transfer, I shall believe that a conspiracy exists."

When Bellièvre questioned him, Salcede, for the third time, repeated his story. He was now conveyed to France, and placed in the castle of Vincennes; the Duke of Anjou having readily acceded to the wish of his brother. When, however, he was brought before the king in council, he disavowed all that he had previously said. His confession had, he affirmed, been dictated to him by three persons in the duke's service, who compelled him to write it. "Why, then, did you say the same to Bellièvre, when those persons were absent?" inquired the king. To this the unblushing prisoner answered, that Bellièvre had intimidated him by threats, and that he had always been under the influence of terror while he was in the ducal palace. Bellièvre was a man remarkable for patience and politeness, but he was so provoked by this charge, that he could not forbear from exclaiming, "You are an impudent slanderer." At the close of the examination, Salcede was removed to the Bastile. There he was again examined, and there he persisted in his disavowal.

It now became a question what should be done with Salcede. The president de Thou advised that he should be retained in prison. He urged that, if the conspiracy were real, his detention would intimidate his accomplices, and afford the means of convicting them in case of need; while, on the other hand, if the conspiracy were only a calumny, invented by turbulent and ill-disposed persons, the existence of the criminal might serve to justify the innocence of those whom he had accused. His son, the celebrated historian, tells us, that the president had an additional motive in thus advising; he wished not merely to hold the conspirators in check, by preserving the evidence of their guilt, but, at the same time, to keep before the king's eyes a memento of the danger to which

he exposed himself by his unbridled licentiousness, and his oppressive misgovernment.

This prudent counsel was, however, strenuously opposed. It was contended that, in whatever light the question was viewed, the culprit ought to die. Supposing the plot to be a reality, his death would terrify his associates; his being suffered to live might drive them to rebellion through despair. If, on the contrary, his tale were false, death ought to punish the calumny; and the more so because, if impunity were granted to him, resentment, at being unjustly suspected, might provoke innocent persons to become really criminal.

The motive which prompted many to insist on the latter mode of proceeding cannot be mistaken; they were pleading for their own lives, or the lives of their friends. The weakness of their reasoning is so evident as to need no exposure. It was not by stifling inquiry that the monarch could hope to neutralize or convert his enemies. History does, indeed, record instances where it was wise as well as generous to throw the veil of oblivion over an incipient plot, and save the plotters from the necessity of becoming open rebels; but this was not a case of the kind. The plotters against Henry were irreclaimable; and, ascribing his conduct to fear and not to mildness, would only be encouraged to persist in their destructive projects. When justice has pronounced upon the criminal, then is the time for a sovereign to show mercy; and if he have a humane heart, he will set no other bounds to his clemency than those which are imperatively prescribed by the safety of the state. But he who shrinks from prosecuting a traitor offers a premium for the growth of treason.

Henry, nevertheless, decided otherwise. He adopted the opinion of those who were for sending Salcede to the

scaffold. In thus following their insidious advice, he was not influenced by principle or mistaken policy; he was mainly actuated by a childish impatience, an eagerness to get rid of a disagreeable subject, which interrupted his contemptible pleasures. Like the stupid bird, which hopes to baffle its pursuers by hiding its head, he seems to have thought that if danger were out of sight it could not reach him. He had, however, another and an equally mean reason for his decision; the wish to mortify de Thou. The president had recently offended him by a virtuous and truly loyal act. Dreading the effect which would be produced by the king's incessant edicts to extort money, he implored him to pause, lest poverty and despair should drive the people to resistance. Instead of profiting by this patriotic warning, Henry turned round to his train of flatterers, and sneeringly exclaimed, "The poor man is in a state of dotage!" He was righteously punished for his scorn of honest and prudent counsel. Ere many years had gone by, he was taught to lament with tears the loss of this doting magistrate, and to confess that, had de Thou lived, Paris would never have revolted.

Salcede was brought to trial. Every thing that could throw light on the fact of the conspiracy was studiously suppressed; there was no search for evidence relative to it, no examination and confronting of the persons who had been charged by the prisoner. The sole object was to obtain a sentence of death against the man whose existence might prove fatal to the conspirators. That object was accomplished on the 25th of October, 1582. Salcede was pronounced guilty of high treason, and was condemned to be torn into quarters by four horses; his quarters were to be placed on gibbets, at the principal gates of Paris, and his head was to be sent to Antwerp, to be exposed

in a similar manner. Immediately previous to his execution, he was likewise to be put to the torture; this was a supererogatory act of cruelty, for, even if we admit the possibility of justifying the use of torture, its infliction in this instance could answer no useful purpose. It was decreed, also, by his judges, that "his confessions, the private letters found on him, and *the declarations which he had made since the commencement of his trial*, should be burnt to ashes; as having been malignantly and calumniously invented, to prejudice the honour of various princes, nobles, and other persons." Here is the key to the whole proceeding.

> "Light dies before thy uncreating word!
> Thy hand, great anarch, lets the curtain fall,
> And universal darkness buries all."

The king was sufficiently devoid of feeling to witness, behind a curtain, the torturing of the prisoner, and to go to the Town Hall, to see executed the ferocious and sickening sentence, which condemned a fellow being to be torn to pieces by horses. But, even in that corrupt and semi-barbarous age, there were not wanting persons who passed a severe censure on Henry, for conduct which was disgraceful to him as a king and a man.

When the torture was applied, Salcede again veered about; he re-asserted the whole of what he had originally stated, with respect to the conspiracy. This blow was, however, adroitly parried by those whom it might otherwise have injured. As he was passing up a dark staircase, after having been tortured, he was joined by a priest, of the order of Jesuits, who exhorted him to retract his confession once more. This ghostly adviser no doubt worked powerfully on his hopes and fears, with regard to another world, and he succeeded in prevailing on him to

make a new retractation. As nothing was to be gained by varying in his story, he persisted in this retractation, and, at the place of execution, he loudly extolled the virtues, and proclaimed the innocence, of his patrons, the Guises. He lived a villain, and he died a self-convicted liar.

In the following year, 1583, there occurred another, but comparatively a trivial, illustration of the ambitious views of the Guises, and the vacillation and timidity of the king. Francis de Rosières, a native of Toul, born in 1534, was a man of prepossessing manners, and of considerable erudition and eloquence. He rose to be Archdeacon of Toul, and through the patronage of Cardinal de Guise, obtained several benefices, and the office of counsellor to the Duke of Lorraine. To prove his gratitude to his benefactors, and probably at their instigation, he composed and published a voluminous work, on "the genealogy of the Dukes of Lorraine and Bar." Its evident purpose was to degrade the reigning family, and exalt that of the Guises. Not satisfied with tracing back in a direct line to Charlemagne the descent of the house of Lorraine, he carried it further through the starless night of ages, up to a son of Clodion, from whom Merovæus was pretended to have usurped the crown. The inference was easy, that the monarchs of the Capetian race were intruders, and that the Guises alone had a legitimate right to the throne. From thence to the assertion of the right was but a single step, on the propriety of which it was for prudence to decide, the question of justice being already settled. This doctrine was, in fact, openly taught in other works, which the Guises, however, affected to disavow, and to regard as fabrications of the protestants, for the purpose of throwing suspicion on their loyalty.

In addition to his laboured genealogy of his patrons, Rosières had been guilty of various misrepresentations, and of a personal attack upon Henry; and he had supported his fabric of falsehood by documents which were manifestly spurious, and by altering others, so as to suit them to his purpose. The other libels Henry had repelled only by employing Pons de Thyard, a man of varied talents, to write an elaborate answer: against this he resolved to proceed in a different manner; he treated it as a state crime. He who had swallowed the camel of last year's conspiracy, now strained at this gnat of a volume. And here again his infirmity of purpose betrayed him to the scorn of his enemies. Commencing vigorously, he despatched Brulart to Toul, to interrogate Rosières; after which the archdeacon was conveyed to Paris, and housed in the Bastile. Thus far, Henry seemed to have meditated a tragedy; but, in its further progress, the drama dwindled down to a miserable farce. The plan which he adopted had the demerit of alike disclosing an inclination to mortify the Guises, and a dread of offending them. It was the latter feeling which prompted him to prohibit the parliament from intervening in the cause, because that body would probably pass a sentence derogatory to the house of Lorraine; it was the former feeling which induced him to persevere in seeking to gain the shadow of a triumph. He could not see that any thing short of complete victory was in reality a defeat.

Pursuing the absurd system which he had framed for himself, Henry now convoked, at the Louvre, a numerous council of nobles and eminent men; all the heads of the Lorraine family were present. Rosières was brought from the Bastile, and, on his knees confessed his fault, owned that he deserved rigorous punishment, and sued

for pardon. The keeper of the seals then gravely lectured him on the enormity of his crime, and declared him to be guilty of high treason. It was next the turn of the queen-mother to play her part; and, accordingly, as had previously been arranged, she stepped forward, and entreated her son to forgive the offender, for the sake of the Duke of Lorraine. The king graciously consented, and delivered Rosières into the hands of the duke. This ludicrous scene was terminated by a decree, that the book should be torn to pieces before the author's face, but that no public record should be made of these things, "lest reproach should fall on the illustrious house of Lorraine." Anquetil pithily remarks, that the crime ought either to have been left unnoticed, or been more severely chastised.

Rosières did not pass the whole of his remaining days in tranquillity. He involved himself in a quarrel with his bishop, and was under the necessity of repairing to Rome, to plead his own cause. How he sped in the holy city is doubtful; one writer affirms that he was censured, another maintains that he was absolved. He died in 1607. Besides the Genealogy, he wrote various works, which are as dead as their author.

Writers who ventured to thwart the Guises in their treasonable designs did not meet with so much lenity from them as was shown to Rosières by the feeble-minded Henry. No merit whatever could counterbalance the sin of opposing them. This was experienced by Peter de Belloy, an eminent jurisconsult, who was born at Montauban, about 1540, and became public professor and counsellor at Toulouse. Belloy was a zealous Catholic, and his three elder brothers had fallen in combatting against the Protestants. But these claims to consideration were not sufficient to prevent him from being persecuted by the house of Lorraine.

Asserting the King of Navarre's right to succeed to the reigning monarch, and exposing the machinations and hollow pretexts of the Guises, was the crime of which Belloy was guilty. The works which drew on him the vengeance of the Guisian faction were the "Catholic Apology;" "A Refutation of the Bull of Pope Pius V. against the Navarrese sovereign;" and "An Examination of the Discourse published against the Royal House of France." In these works, which were given to the press in 1585 and 1586, he contended, that the Protestantism of Henry of Navarre did not deprive him of his title to the crown; that the king could not disinherit his legitimate heir; that the pope had no authority to sit in judgment upon the question of the succession; and that the seeming ardour of the Guises, in behalf of Catholicism, was nothing more than a mask to cover their designs upon the throne. His language was strictly decorous, his candonr and impartiality were evident, but his facts and arguments were unforgivable.

Slander was the weapon which his enemies began by using against Belloy. To his "Catholic Apology" a reply was published by a Jesuit, who assumed the designation of Franciseulus Romulus, but who is believed to have been the celebrated Bellarmin. To give weight to his reasonings, the Jesuit boldly asserted that his opponent, who falsely took the name of Catholic, was at least a heretic, if not an atheist. This calumny fell harmless upon the object at which it was aimed. It was not so with calumny from a higher quarter. The Guises were not satisfied with defaming him; they determined to make him feel their power more effectually. An unfortunate maniac, le Breton by name, of whom I shall have next occasion to speak, had written a seditious libel. This

libel the Guises ascribed to Belloy. Failing to effect their purpose by this accusation, they painted him in the darkest colours to the king, as a dangerous mischief-maker and heretic, and the weak monarch was at last prevailed upon to commit him to the prison of the Concièrgerie.

After Henry had assassinated the Duke of Guise, the Council of Sixteen removed Belloy to the Bastile, where he remained in close confinement for nearly four years. He at length found means to escape, and he sought refuge at St. Denis, which was garrisoned by the troops of Henry IV. He was introduced to Henry, by Vic, the governor; and the king rewarded his talents and fidelity, by appointing him advocate-general to the parliament of Toulouse. His subsequent life appears to have been passed in quiet. The date of his death is not known, but in 1612 he was still living. He wrote various works, besides those which have already been mentioned: among them are a "Dissertation on the Origin and Institution of various Orders of Chivalry;" and an Exposition of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel."

Francis le Breton, to whom I have already alluded, affords a striking proof that, when Henry the third forbore to punish, it was not clemency, but fear, indolence, or caprice, that withheld his hand. Le Breton was a barrister of Poitiers, who had acquired considerable reputation by his forensic talents. It speaks strongly in favour of his honesty and the kindness of his nature, that he espoused so warmly the part of those for whom he pleaded, as entirely to identify their interest with his own. A mere mercenary counsel, indifferent to the justice or injustice of his client's claim, could have had no such feelings. Unfortunately, le Breton was of a family in which symptoms of insanity had often appeared, and the

dreadful malady was lurking in his brain. The loss of a cause, in which he was engaged for a poor individual, at once roused the latent disease into action. He burst into vehement invectives against the judges, and presented a violent memorial against them to a higher tribunal. The superior judges, who saw how he was affected, gave him a gentle rebuke, and dismissed the complaint. Irritated by this, he journeyed to Paris, to make an appeal to the king. Having fastened his memorial on the end of a stick, he went to the Louvre, where the guards, who rightly concluded that he was bereft of his senses, endeavoured to drive him away. Le Breton, however, was immovable, and he exclaimed so loudly and incessantly, "The cause of the poor is abandoned, and God will take vengeance for it," that the noise reached the king's ear, and he ordered him to be admitted. Henry listened to his story, and then commanded him to return to his own country, and to keep silence in public. To have sent him to the hospital would have been a more praiseworthy act.

Instead of proceeding to Poitiers, the maniac wandered through the provinces, calling on the people to recover their liberty, and sending inflammatory writings to the towns which were too distant for him to visit. At last he reached Bordeaux, and demanded an interview with the Duke of Mayenne. It was granted; and the unfortunate lunatic employed the whole of it in conjuring the duke to defend the cause of the poor. Mayenne, who felt that le Breton's harangues to the multitude, mad as he was, might be serviceable to the Guises, gave him money, and probably hopes, and then desired him to withdraw.

Encouraged by this gracious reception, le Breton made the best of his way to Paris, where he sat down to compose a furious invective against the king, whom, with

more truth than prudence or decorum, he styled a debauched tyrant, and the magistrates, whom he stigmatised as men steeped in wickedness, who, to please that tyrant, and gratify men in power, betrayed the cause of the poor. Two printers were found who had sufficient boldness to risk the printing of this libel. But, just as it was about to appear, the whole impression was seized, and the author was lodged in the Bastile. The printers were sentenced to be whipped, with their necks in a halter, and then to be banished from the kingdom. The libel was burnt by the public executioner.

Believing, or affecting to believe, that the prisoner was less a madman than an instrument of the malcontents, Henry endeavoured, by secret interrogations, to obtain a confession that such was the fact. The attempt failed, and the prisoner was then given up to the parliament for trial. It was his misfortune that he was not the agent of some formidable conspirator; he would in that case have had a fair chance of escaping.

When le Breton was brought before the parliament, his malady manifested itself in a more extravagant manner than ever. He treated the court with unbounded contempt, spoke to the members with his hat on, and would answer no questions. As he thus suffered judgment to go by default, sentence of death was passed upon him, as guilty of having excited the people to revolt; but his equitable and compassionate judges also decreed, that "a deputation should wait upon the king, to represent that the culprit laboured under mental alienation, and to entreat that his majesty would pardon a crime which was rather the effect of disease than of free will."

But neither the prayer of the parliament, nor the supplications of le Breton's mother, who brought irre-

fragable evidence of his madness, had any effect upon the heartless Henry. Here was a victim whom he could safely sacrifice, and he would not forego the pleasure. Yet even here his mental cowardice peeped out. Instead of the involuntary offender being conveyed to the Grêve, which was the usual place of execution, he was hanged in the palace court. It seems to have been supposed, and perhaps correctly, that the people could not witness without emotion the death of a man whose malady and whose fate had been brought upon him by commiseration for their sorrows, and who perished because he had no friend, while notorious criminals were daily allowed to brave the laws with impunity. Far from acting as an example to deter others, the murder of le Breton—for in his deplorable situation it was a murder—only served to exasperate the people in a tenfold degree. It was the singular infelicity of Henry never to be right in his treatment of crime; he was despised when he did not punish, he was hated when he did.

Political persecution consigned to the Bastile, at this period, and when he was on the verge of the grave from extreme old age, a man who was a benefactor, and an honour, to his native land. Bernard Palissy was born about the year 1500, in the bishopric of Agen. His parents were so scantily favoured by fortune that they could do little for his education; but he contrived to acquire a knowledge of reading and writing, and sufficient skill in drawing and land-measuring to gain a livelihood as a draughtsman, a painter of glass and images, and a land surveyor. Geology, natural philosophy, and chemistry, next attracted his attention, and with respect to the two former he was far in advance of his contemporaries.

It was about the year 1539, when he had settled at

Saintes, after his journeys through the provinces, that a circumstance occurred which gave a colour to all his future life. He chanced to be shown a beautiful enamelled porcelain cup, manufactured in Italy. It struck him that, if he could discover the secret of fabricating this ware, he might obtain riches, and likewise serve his country by introducing into it a new art. From that moment he pursued his object with admirable energy and perseverance. Innumerable experiments failed, his resources wasted away, poverty and almost starvation stared him in the face; yet still, in spite of this, and of the exhortations of some, and the sneers of others, he steadily persisted. At length, after having suffered a mental martyrdom of sixteen years' duration, he succeeded in his efforts, and independence and fame were his reward. For the adornment of their palaces and gardens, the king and all the nobles of France were eager to possess the figures and vases which were produced by Palissy's taste and skill.

Bernard Palissy had too enlarged a mind to devote himself wholly to the heaping up of riches. The toils of business he diversified and lightened by liberal studies. He formed a cabinet of natural history at Paris; gave, for several years, a course of lectures on natural history and physics; and wrote a variety of works, valuable for their facts and reasonings and the new and just views contained in them, and unaffected and pleasing in their style.

Palissy was a Protestant, firmly attached to his religion, and from that attachment arose the only troubles which molested him in the decline of life. When the public exercise of their worship was prohibited, he gathered into a private assembly, a few individuals of his own class, each of whom in his turn expounded the tenets of the

Gospel. In 1562, though the Duke of Montpensier had given him a safeguard, and his manufactory had been declared a privileged place, the bigoted judges of Saintes destroyed his establishment, and would have destroyed the proprietor also, had not the king interposed, and rescued him from their hands. The memory of Charles the ninth is branded with eternal infamy, but candour requires it to be owned that he was a man of taste and talent; a lover of literature and the arts. It is melancholy to think upon what he might have been, and what he was. He invited the persecuted artist to Paris and gave him apartments in the Tuileries. Thus protected, Palissy remained unhurt during the horrible slaughter of St. Bartholomew's day.

The protection which Charles the ninth extended to Palissy, the weaker-minded Henry the third wanted courage to continue. When the influence of the Guises became predominant in Paris, the venerable artist was arrested by the Council of Sixteen, and thrown into the Bastile. There Henry visited him. "My good man," said the king, "if you cannot bring yourself to conform on the point of religion, I shall be compelled to leave you in the clutches of my enemies." Palissy was then nearly ninety years of age, but his spirit was not bowed by the weight of years, or the prospect of death. He firmly replied, "Sire, you have several times said that you pity me; but I pity *you*, who have uttered the words 'I am compelled.' This is not speaking like a king. I will teach you the royal language. Neither the Guisarts, nor your whole people, can ever compel me to bend my knee before an image, for I know how to die."

The firmness of Palissy was not put to the extreme proof; but, had it been so, there is no reason to believe that his conduct would have belied his words. He was saved from

the fiery ordeal by the Duke of Mayenne, who humanely threw so many obstacles in the way of his trial, that Palissy died a natural death, in the Bastile, about the year 1589, no less respected for his virtues than admired for his talents.

Those enemies of Henry, into whose hands he feared that he should be "compelled" to deliver up Palissy, continued to plot against the monarch with an astonishing degree of audacity, which could be equalled only by the tameness with which he endured it. Plans were successively formed by them, to obtain possession of Boulogne; to arrest him on his way from Vincennes, and subsequently, at the fair of St. Germain; and to make themselves masters of the Bastile, the Arsenal, the Temple, and other posts in Paris, massacre the ministers, judges and courtiers, and depose and imprison him. Among the bitterest and most active of his enemies was the Duchess of Montpensier, sister of the Duke of Guise, who constantly wore at her girdle a pair of golden scissors, for the purpose, as she insolently said, of giving the monkish tonsure to brother Henry of Valois, previous to his being sent to a monastery. Henry frustrated these schemes, but had not spirit to punish them. The impunity which the criminals enjoyed produced its natural effect. The resources and the boldness of the conspirators were increased; the memorable day of the barricades ensued; the monarch was expelled from Paris; and he entered it no more.

As soon as the king had taken flight from the Louvre, Guise put garrisons into the Arsenal, and other military positions of Paris, and likewise into Vincennes and the town of Corbeil. The Bastile might still have remained in the power of Henry, and afforded him an easy entrance into his capital, had he not been guilty of an unaccount-

able act of folly. Colonel Ornano, an officer of established reputation, had offered to pledge his head that, if he were intrusted with the command, he would hold the place to the last extremity; but Henry preferred leaving it in the hands of Lawrence Testu, of whom it was sarcastically said, that he was more fit to govern a bottle than a fortress. He justified the contempt which was expressed for him, by surrendering the moment that he received a summons from Guise. His prompt submission called forth another sarcasm, by which he was declared to have given up his post, because he had no oranges to flavour his ragoût of partridges.

The government of the Bastile was conferred by Guise on Bussi le Clerc, the most active member of the Council of Sixteen, a determined hater of the king and the Protestants, and devoted heart and soul to the Guises. Bussi was originally a fencing-master, but changed his calling, and became an attorney. He was not long without prisoners. Among the first whom he received were Perreuse, late the provost of the merchants, who was expelled from his office for being faithful to the king, La Guesle, the Attorney-General, and Damours, a Protestant minister.

Damours was fortunate. Some ferocious wild beasts have been known to contract an attachment to helpless animals which were thrown into their dens. Bussi did so with respect to Damours. Instead of tormenting him, and being eager to send him to the flames, a mode of proceeding which might have been expected from a zealous and unenlightened Catholic, he took a singular liking for him. With many oaths, he declared that, "thorough Hugonot as he was, Damours was worth more than all those politicians, the presidents and counsellors, who were

nothing but hypocrites;" and he bestirred himself so vigorously on behalf of his favourite that he procured his liberation.

James de la Guesle was born in 1557, and succeeded his father in the office of Attorney-General. After the day of the barricades, he endeavoured to escape in disguise from Paris, for the purpose of joining the fugitive king; but he was recognised, and committed to prison. He did not long remain in the Bastile; and, as soon as he was set free, he proceeded to St. Cloud, where Henry was residing. The death of the king, which soon after occurred, afforded the enemies of La Guesle a pretext to throw out insinuations against him; for it was by him that Clement, the assassin monk, was introduced into the presence of the monarch. His loyalty was, however, too well known to admit of being stained by calumny. After having held office throughout the reign of Henry IV., and enjoyed the full confidence of that sovereign, La Guesle died in 1612.

The Bastile was not allowed to remain untenanted by prisoners of distinction. Bussi had soon the gratification of wreaking his hatred upon "the presidents and counsellors" whom he had described as being "nothing but hypocrites." The parliament, still faithful to the king, was a serious obstacle in the way of the Leaguers, and the council of Sixteen determined, therefore, to apply an effectual remedy to this evil. This remedy was of the same nature as that which, long afterwards, was employed in England, by Oliver Cromwell, and is known by the name of Pride's Purge. Bussi le Clerc was the Colonel Pride on this occasion.

On the 16th of January, 1589, while the parliament was about to choose deputies for a mission to the king

at Blois, Bussi, who had surrounded the hall with troops, suddenly entered, attended by some of his armed followers, and began to read a list of the proscribed members, among whom were the two presidents. On hearing this, the whole of the members simultaneously declared that they would share the fate of their chiefs. Bussi took them at their word, and they were led away to the Bastile, where they were soon joined by some of their colleagues, who, suspecting what would happen, had not quitted their homes, but whose caution had failed to ensure their safety. All those who were not on Bussi's list were, however, liberated in the course of the same evening, and a part of the others were allowed to return to their homes, on their friends becoming answerable for them. Having thus got rid of the persons who were obnoxious to them, the Leaguers remodelled the parliament, in such a manner as to render it subservient to their purposes.

The most distinguished of the parliamentary members who were kept in hold were Achille de Harlay, Nicholas Potier de Blancmesnil, Louis Seguier, and James Gillot.

The personal and mental courage of Harlay qualified him well for the stormy times in which he lived. To the influence of fear he seems to have been scarcely accessible. To the merit of unchangeable loyalty he added the rarer merit of opposing the rash and oppressive edicts of the sovereign. His legal knowledge was profound, and his integrity without a stain. He was born in 1536, and he sprung from a family which had distinguished itself, for more than two-centuries, on the seat of justice or in the field of battle. At the age of forty-six, he succeeded his father-in-law, Christopher de Thou, as president of the parliament of Paris.

When the success of his partisans, on the day of the Barricades, had rendered the duke of Guise master of the capital, he went, with a train of followers, to the house of Harlay, for the purpose of prevailing on him to convoke the parliament, that the recent measures might obtain something like a sanction. The president was walking in the garden, and he did not deign to notice his visitor till the duke approached him; then, raising his voice, he said, "It is a lamentable thing when the servant drives out his master. As to all the rest, my soul is God's, my heart is the king's and my body is in the hands of the wicked; let them do as they please with it." Guise still pressing him to assemble the parliament, he sternly replied, "When the majesty of the monarch is violated, the magistrate has no longer any authority." Hoping to intimidate him, some of the duke's followers threatened him with death, but their threats were as unavailing as the request of Guise had been. "I have," replied the undaunted magistrate, "neither head nor life that I value more than the love I owe to God, the service which I owe to the king, and the good which I owe to my country."

After an imprisonment of several months Harlay obtained his liberty, at the price of ten thousand crowns. The moment that he was free he departed from Paris, to join Henry the fourth at Tours, and the monarch appointed him president of the parliament sitting in that city, and composed of Parisian members, who had succeeded in escaping from the clutches of the Leaguers. In this post, Harlay sustained his high reputation, by the vigour and eloquence with which he refuted the manifestos of Spain and the League, and the bulls of the Roman Pontiff.

Peace at length came, and Henry rewarded his services by the estate of Beaumont, with the title of count. When

the first president returned to Paris, all the members of the parliament went out to meet and congratulate him. As Harlay advanced in years he did not bate one jot of the spirit which he had manifested at an earlier period. He still unflinchingly supported the rights of the kingdom, and the liberties of the Gallican church, and protested against whatever he deemed pernicious to the people or the monarch. The re-establishment of the Jesuits he strongly but vainly opposed. From one of his speeches to Henry the fourth, in 1604, we may judge with what an honest freedom he uttered his sentiments. The parliament having dissented from a measure which the Council had resolved upon, its dissent was construed into disobedience. "If to serve well be disobedience," replied the venerable magistrate, "the parliament is in the habit of committing that fault; and, when a conflict arises between the king's absolute power and the good of his service, it prefers the one to the other, not from disobedience, but from a desire to do its duty, and to keep its conscience clear."

After having held the first presidentship for thirty-four years, Harlay, whose sight and hearing were impaired, resigned it early in 1616, and he died, on the 23d of October, of the same year, at the age of eighty.

Born at Paris, in 1541, of a family which had given several eminent magistrates to the state, Potier de Blancmesnil attained the rank of president à mortier in 1578. With talents less splendid than those of Harlay, he was not inferior to him in probity and devoted loyalty. From the imprisonment which followed his seizure by Bussi le Clerc he was released in a few days; but he did not long retain his liberty. When Henry, on the 1st of November, 1589, made himself master of the suburbs of Paris, and

there seemed reason to believe that the new monarch would soon enter the city in triumph, the joy of Potier was so undisguised, that the Leaguers again sent him to his old quarters in the Bastile. He was brought to trial as an adherent of the Bearnese—for so Henry was contemptuously called—and he would no doubt have suffered an ignominious death, had not the Duke of Mayenne interposed, and released him from prison. Throwing himself at the feet of his deliverer, Potier exclaimed "My Lord, I am indebted to you for my life; yet I dare to request from you a still greater benefit, that of permitting me to join my legitimate sovereign. I shall all my life acknowledge you as my benefactor; but I cannot serve you as my master!" Mayenne had greatness of mind enough not to be offended by this speech. Affected even to tears by the appeal, he raised up and embraced the suppliant, and allowed him to depart. It is delightful to find a few bright flowers of virtue among the lurid and noxious growth produced by civil war.

Henry the fourth rewarded Potier by making him president of the parliament of Chalons. In that office he continued during the whole of Henry's reign. When the monarch perished by the knife of Ravaillac, the news was carried to Chalons, accompanied, as is customary in such cases, by a thousand terrific rumours. As soon as he heard the lamentable tidings, René Potier, the president's son, who was bishop of Beauvais, hurried to the hall where the parliament was sitting, and entreated him to quit the place without delay, in a carriage which he had brought for the purpose. But the magistrate had more firmness than the prelate. He answered, in a loud voice, that the state and the country called on him not to absent himself on such an emergency, but to die, if needful, in

order to secure the obedience which was due to Henry the fourth's son; and he earnestly exhorted his colleagues not to remove from their seats. It was probably for this opportune act of courage and fidelity that Mary de Medicis conferred on him the title of her chancellor.

Potier lived to the venerable age of ninety-four, preserving all his faculties to the last. His decease took place on the 1st of June 1635.

It has been remarked by French writers, that no family furnished more magistrates than that of Seguier. From the first appearance of the name in the parliament of Toulouse, when that body was originally formed, in the 14th century, down to the period of the French revolution, the number amounted to sixty-eight, of whom many possessed high talents, and consummate legal knowledge. Peter, the first who bore that prenomen, is characterised, by the poet Scevola St. Marthe, as "one of the most brilliant lights of the temple of the laws," and in this praise there is no poetical exaggeration. To this magistrate France owes eternal gratitude, for his having frustrated the project of introducing the Inquisition into that country. He was warned beforehand that he would do well to avoid venturing too far in his opposition, but he nobly set the danger at defiance, and he triumphed.

The six sons who survived him were all of the legal profession. No monarch ever paid a more graceful compliment to a subject than that which Henry the fourth paid to the second Peter, a son of the first, who became president on the resignation of his father. The courtiers pressing so closely round the king that the president could not reach him, Henry held out his hand to Seguier, and said, "Gentlemen, allow to come to me my inseparable during my bad fortune, which, with you, he aided me to

surmount. I can answer for it that, notwithstanding the business with which I burthen him, he will always be too much my friend to neglect me." In a similar strain he publicly addressed Anthony, another brother, who was setting off on an embassy to Venice. "You made your way into my affections," said he, "in the same manner that I did into my kingdom, in spite of the resistance and the slanders of my enemies and enviers."

Louis, the fourth brother, was a counsellor of the parliament, and also dean of the cathedral church of Notre Dame, at Paris. He obtained his release from the Bastile by paying a large ransom; but he was not allowed to remain in peace, he being soon after expelled from the capital by the Leaguers. He was subsequently sent to Rome, by Henry the fourth, to negotiate with the pope for the monarch's absolution. On his return, he was offered the bishopric of Laon, which would have given him the elevated and much coveted rank of duke and peer. Seguier, however, devoid of ambition, preferred to remain in the humble station of dean. He died in 1610.

Gillot, the last of those whom I have mentioned as having been lodged in the Bastile by Bussi le Clerc, was certainly entitled to share the fate of his companions, his attachment to the royal cause being a matter of notoriety. He was of a noble Burgundian family, possessed a good fortune, much erudition, and a valuable library, was connected with most of the wits and learned men of that period, and assembled them frequently at his social board, where they conversed on topics of philosophy and literature. He had also the higher merit of being beneficent, sincere, and candid. It was said of him, that he had so benign a disposition that his sole delight was in obliging. Gillot was educated for the church, and became dean of Langres,

and canon of the Holy Chapel at Paris; he was likewise one of the ecclesiastical counsellors, or judges, in the parliament. His abode in the Bastile does not appear to have been of long duration; it is probable that he ransomed himself. For his incarceration he took an ample revenge, by bearing a part in writing the admirable satire called "la Satire Ménippée, ou, le Catholicon d'Espagne," which covered the Leaguers with ineffaceable ridicule, and is said to have been more injurious to their cause than the sword of Henry the fourth. The harangue of the legate at the opening of the states of the League, and the laughable idea of the procession of the Leaguers, are attributed to Gillot. This estimable and talented man died in 1619.

The Council of Sixteen, like the Common Council of Paris in 1792 and 1793, was eager to monopolise all the power of the state. It carried on a secret correspondence with the Pope and the Spanish monarch, and was obviously preparing to subvert the authority of the Duke of Mayenne. In furtherance of its plan, it resolved to strike the parliament with terror, and of course render that body subservient, by a decisive blow. A pretext was furnished by the acquittal of a person named Brigard, who had been tried on a charge of corresponding with the royalists. A cry was immediately raised, that the parliament had violated its duty by granting impunity to treason, and that some measure must be adopted to prevent the recurrence of such a crime. Several meetings were clandestinely held, to decide upon what should be done. The result was that, on the 15th of November, 1591, the president Brisson, and the counsellors Larcher and Tardif, were seized by order of the Sixteen, carried to prison, and hanged there upon a beam, without even the semblance of a trial. The bodies, with calumnious

papers attached to them, were then removed to the Grêve, and publicly exposed on three gibbets.

This last outrage caused the downfall of the Sixteen. Mayenne had long been dissatisfied with the conduct of these turbulent and sanguinary men, and he was heartily glad of this opportunity to punish them, and annihilate their political influence. He could do both with safety, as a great majority of the citizens were shocked and disgusted by the murderous act which had been committed. The duke was then with his army at Soissons, where he was expecting to be joined by the prince of Parma. Leaving his troops under the command of the young Duke of Guise, he hastened, with three hundred horse and fifteen hundred foot, to Paris. A few days after his arrival, he consigned four of the criminals to execution; proscribed two who had escaped; prohibited, under pain of death, all secret meetings; and thus put an end for ever to the tyranny of the council. The partisans and agents of Spain murmured in private at these decisive measures, but they were in too feeble a minority to venture upon doing more.

Among those who were executed was not Bussi le Clerc; though, as he had been the most conspicuous actor in the murders, he richly deserved death. It was to being governor of the Bastile that he was indebted for his safety. When Mayenne came to Paris, Bussi prudently kept within the walls of the fortress; and, as there were various reasons which made it unadvisable to besiege him, he was allowed to negociate. On condition that he should not be punished for his share in the murder of Brisson, Larcher, and Tardif, and that he should be at liberty to go wheresoever he pleased with his property, he agreed to surrender the Bastile. The first of these articles was

faithfully performed; but with respect to the second he was not so lucky, for Mayenne's soldiers deprived him of the booty which he had made during the civil war. He retired to Brussels, where, during forty years, he earned a scanty subsistence, as an obscure teacher of fencing. The custody of the Bastile was confided, by the Duke of Mayenne, to du Bourg, a brave and trusty officer.

In 1589, after Henry the fourth's attempt upon Paris, when he had little more than the shadow of an army left, and was obliged to retreat on Normandy, the Parisians were so confident that the Bearnese would be brought back a prisoner by the Duke of Mayenne, that the windows in St. Anthony's-street were hired to see him pass along in his way to the Bastile; in the following year he held them cooped up within their walls, suffering the direst extremity of famine; and now, in 1594, he entered the capital in triumph, as an acknowledged sovereign, amidst the shouts of the multitude. It must be owned, however, that for the submission of Paris, as well as of many other cities, Henry had to thank his purse rather than his sword. For giving up Paris, Brissac, the governor, received nearly seventeen hundred thousand livres. The whole of the strong places which the king bought. cost him no less than thirty-two millions of livres, besides governments, offices, and titles. At dinner, on the day of his entry, he pointedly alluded to this circumstance, in the presence of some of the vendors. Nicholas, a jovial poet and man of wit, was standing by Henry's chair: "Well," said the king to him, "what say you to seeing me here in Paris?" "Sire," replied Nicholas, "that which is Cæsar's has been rendered unto Cæsar." "Ventre saint-gris!" exclaimed Henry in reply, "I have not been treated at all like Cæsar, for it has not been rendered to me but sold to me, and at a pretty high price too."

There was, nevertheless, one man among the Leaguers who was not venal. This was du Bourg, the governor of the Bastile. His vigilance had recently frustrated a plot to seize on the fortress, and he now prepared to defend his charge to the utmost. For five days he refused to listen to any overtures, and he even turned his cannon upon the city. But having received information that it was impossible for Mayenne to succour him, he consented to capitulate upon honourable terms. His garrison was allowed to retire with arms and baggage. Money he refused to accept; nor would he acknowledge Henry as his master; he had, he said, given his faith to the Duke of Mayenne, and he would not violate it. With a strange mixture of ferocity, coarseness, and chivalrous feeling, he added, that Brissac was a traitor, that he would maintain it in mortal combat with him before the king, and that he "would eat his heart in his belly."

The circumstances of the times, which rendered it necessary to reign with some degree of caution, but still more the generous and clement character of Henry, for a few years prevented the Bastile from having many captive inmates. Menaces of sending individuals to it were occasionally thrown out, but they were not executed. In 1596, for instance, when, to supply his pressing wants, Henry had unjustly seized on the money destined to pay annuitants at the townhall, we find him giving vent to a momentary fit of anger, and threatening whoever should presume to hold what he was pleased to call seditious language, with respect to this arbitrary measure. The seditious language, which thus excited his wrath, was nothing more than a petition, which a citizen named Carel had drawn up on behalf of the plundered annuitants.

There was a moment when the Bastile was on the point

of receiving an illustrious victim; no less a man than Theodore Agrippa d'Aubigné, the long tried and faithful friend of Henry, amidst peril and misfortune. Irritated by d'Aubigné's restless zeal in the cause of the Huguenots, the king gave Sully an order to arrest him, but it was soon withdrawn.

In 1602, Sully was appointed governor of the Bastile. Since 1597 he had been at the head of the finance department, and during his able administration, a part of the Bastile was occupied in a manner such as it had never before been, nor ever was afterwards. It became a place of deposit for the yearly surplus of revenue, which was obtained by the judicious system of the minister. The amount of the treasure thus accumulated has been variously estimated, but it was probably about forty millions of livres. It was designed to be appropriated to the realising of Henry's military projects. The Tour du Trésor is supposed to have derived its name from its having been the tower in which this hoard was secured.

CHAPTER V.

Reign of Henry IV. continued—Viscount de Tavannes—The marshal Duke of Biron—Faults of Biron—Friendship of Henry IV. for Biron—La Fin, and his influence over Biron—The Duke of Savoy—Biron's first treason pardoned—Embassies of Biron—Speech of Queen Elizabeth to Biron—Discontent among the nobles—Art of la Fin—Imprisonment of Renazé—La Fin betrays Biron—Artifices employed to lull Biron into security—Arrest of Biron, and the count of Auvergne—Conduct of Biron in the Bastile—His trial—His execution—Respect paid to his remains—Monbarot sent to the Bastile—The Count of Auvergne—He is sent to the Bastile but soon released—He plots again—Cause and intent of the conspiracy—He is again arrested—Sentence of death passed on him, but commuted for imprisonment—He spends twelve years in the Bastile—Mary of Medicis releases him—Conspiracy of Merargues—He is executed—Death of Henry IV.

The first distinguished prisoner of the Bastile, after the firm establishment of Henry on the throne, was John de Saulx, Viscount de Tavannes, second son of that marshal who acquired an undying but unenviable fame during the massacre of St. Bartholomew. He was born in 1555, and may be said to have been nursed in a deadly hatred to the protestants. The viscount accompanied Henry the third to Poland, remained behind when his master departed, visited the Turkish frontier provinces, was engaged in various actions, and at length fell into the hands of the Ottomans. He managed, however, to get free, and, in 1575, he revisited his native country.

In the wars between the catholics and the protestants, Tavannes was an indefatigable scourge of the latter. On one occasion, while he was governor of Auxonne, he was in no small danger; he was surprised and wounded in a

church by the enemy, and was confined in a castle. Yet though the wall was a hundred feet high, and he was guarded in sight, he contrived to escape. In the war of the League, against both Henries, he rendered himself conspicuous by his violence and perseverance. He proposed to arm the people with pikes; but this proposal was overruled, on the ground that it tended to excite in their minds the idea of a republic. In attempting to relieve Noyon, he was again made prisoner; he was, however, soon exchanged, the mother, wife, and two sisters of the Duke of Longueville being given as an equivalent for him. In 1592, he was appointed to the government of Burgundy, and he maintained the contest till 1595, when, being abandoned by all his companions in the cause, he yielded a sullen submission to Henry.

Having refused to join the king at the siege of Amiens, he was arrested, in 1597, and committed to the Bastile. Tavannes had certainly a talent for escaping; we have seen that he twice extricated himself from confinement, and he now did so for the third time. By what means he eluded the vigilance of his jailors does not appear. Henry seems to have cherished no very strong resentment against the fugitive; for, instead of placing him in surer custody, he allowed him to reside unmolested on his estate, where Tavannes died, about the year 1630. The viscount published a life of his father, a curious and valuable work; of which, however, some passages are animated by a spirit dishonourable to the writer.

That Tavannes, who was long his determined enemy, and never professed to have become his friend, should be openly or secretly hostile to him, could excite no surprise in Henry; but his feelings must have received a deep wound when he discovered that he might say, with the

inspired royal psalmist, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted his heel against me."

Charles de Gontaut, Duke of Biron, the son of a man distinguished for his honour, loyalty, valour, and martial exploits, was born about 1562, and inherited his father's warlike spirit, but not his praiseworthy qualities. In his childhood he was so dull of apprehension that he could scarcely be taught to read. In his military studies he must, however, have made early and extraordinary progress; for at fourteen he was colonel of the Swiss regiments, and when he was only fifteen, the command of the army of Guienne was entrusted to him for some weeks by his father, who had broken one of his thighs. His religion we may believe to have hung loosely enough upon him, as he twice changed it before he reached his sixteenth year.

There were two crying sins of the age, duelling and gaming, in which Biron made himself conspicuous. He was not yet twenty when he fought a duel with the Prince of Carency, who was a rival suitor to the heiress of the family of Caumont. Each party had two seconds, all of whom were in habits of friendship with each other. It was in a snow-storm, at day break, that the combatants met; and, by taking their ground so that the snow drove into the faces of their antagonists, Biron and his seconds contrived to destroy them. This triple murder was pardoned by Henry the third, at the request of the Duke of Epernon. As a gamester, Biron played so deeply, and with such infatuated perseverance, that he himself said, "I know not whether I shall die on the scaffold; but if I do not, I am sure that I shall die in a workhouse."

The scaffold which, with somewhat of a divining

spirit, he seems to have thought his not improbable doom, was more than once predicted to him. The basis on which one prediction was built may excite a smile. "The archbishop of Lyons," says an old writer, "judged better than any one else of the nature of men by their countenances. For having one day curiously contemplated the features and characters of the marshal Biron's face, he pronounced that he had an exceedingly bad physiognomy, verily that of a man who was fated to perish wretchedly." On surer grounds, on a knowledge of his son's disposition, his father sometimes said to him, "Baron," (that was his early title) "I advise you to go and plant cabbages on your estate, as soon as peace is made; for otherwise, you will certainly lose your head at the Grêve."

The faults of Biron were, indeed, such as to justify melancholy forebodings with respect to his end. He was vain, imperious, passionate, restlessly active, so greedy of praise that he deemed himself robbed of all that was given to others, so high an estimater of his own services that he never thought them enough rewarded, and so reckless of speech, that, when he was in an angry mood, his invectives and reproaches did not spare even the sovereign. These faults were rendered more dangerous to him by his habits of profusion, and the consequent occasional emptiness of his purse, which laid him open to temptation, especially during his fits of dissatisfaction and disgust. On the other hand, it is beyond all doubt that Biron, for some years after the outset of his career, was devoted to Henry the fourth; he was eminently intrepid, displayed unwearied zeal, gave an admirable example of discipline, and was a consummate master of his profession. "No one," said Henry, "has a keener eye in reconnoitring an enemy, nor a more ready hand at arraying an army."

At the battles of Arques, Ivry, and Aumale, at the sieges of Paris and Rouen, and on various other occasions, Biron was conspicuous among his fellow chiefs. His promotion kept pace with his exploits, and he rose rapidly to the highest dignities. In 1592, Henry appointed him admiral of France, and, in 1594, a marshal; on receiving the latter rank he gave up the office of admiral, which Villars demanded as a part of his reward for the surrender of Rouen. It has been imagined that Biron cherished a rankling resentment for the deprivation of the admiralship; but this is more than doubtful; he appears, on the contrary, to have acceded to it with a good grace. In 1595, he obtained the government of Burgundy, and his life was saved by Henry, at the sharp encounter of Fontaine-Française. After having manifested his wonted military talents at the siege of Amiens, in 1598, Biron attained the zenith of his elevation, by being created a duke and peer. When the deputies of the parliament waited on the king, in Picardy, to congratulate him on the success of his arms, he paid to the new-made peer one of those well-turned compliments by which he so often delighted his warriors and statesmen. In turning to account that part of "the cheap defence of nations" which consists in gracefully bestowing praise, no man was more of a proficient than Henry. "Gentlemen," said he to the deputies, "I introduce to you the Marshal de Biron, whom I present with equal success to my enemies and my friends."

Thenceforth, thanks to his own folly, the star of Biron gradually declined till it set in blood. He soon became unsafe to be opposed to the king's enemies, and unworthy of being presented to his friends. Vanity and prodigality were the faults which began his ruin; the one led him to

think that his superlative merit was inadequately requited, the other caused him to accuse Henry of avarice and ingratitude, because the monarch did not feed his extravagance with boundless supplies. Biron might, nevertheless, have stopped short of destruction, had there not been perpetually a tempter at his ear, whispering sinister counsels. His evil genius was Beauvais La Nocle, sieur de La Fin, a veteran intriguer, who had spent his life in disturbing the public peace, and was still in correspondence with Spain, Savoy, the banished partisans of the League, and the malcontents in various provinces. He is truly described as having been "an enterprising, active, insinuating man, especially skilful in getting on the weak side of those whom he wished to seduce. Bold with the rash, circumspect with the prudent, he seemed to give himself up entirely to his accomplices, that he might provide for his own safety at their expense." Henry, who well knew the character of the man, warned Biron against him, but the warning was slighted.*

The peace of Vervins, which relieved France from a burdensome war, precipitated the fall of Biron. Even before it was concluded, he had listened to the blandishments of Spanish emissaries, and had suffered them to tempt his ambition with the prospect of independent sovereignty, but he had stopped short on the verge of disloyalty. While his mind was thus susceptible of treasonable infection, he was unfortunately despatched by Henry to Brussels, for the purpose of interchanging, with the archduke, the customary oaths as to the faithful per-

* Henry pointed his advice with a pun, which is not translatable. He recommended to Biron, "Qu'il l'otât d'auprès de lui, sinon que *La Fin l'affineroit.*" In English, if such a deceiver's name were Cousin, we might similarly say, "If you do not get rid of that Cousin, he will cozen you."

formance of the treaty. There he was surrounded by every imaginable seduction. He was "the observed of all observers;" the most splendid entertainments were given, expressly in honour of him; and he heard nothing but exaggerated praises of his transcendent valour and skill, insidious expressions of regret that he should serve a master so blind to his worth, or so meanly jealous of it, and highly-coloured representations of the glorious career which he might run, if he would devote his talents to the cause of the Spanish sovereign. When it was imagined that his head was sufficiently turned, a treaty with Philip was proposed to him. But he was not yet prepared to go thus far; he would give no more than a vague promise to join the Catholics, in case of their rising against Henry, and he returned to Paris only half a traitor.

That which had been begun in the Netherlands was completed in France. During the troubles of the League, the Duke of Savoy, Charles Emmanuel, had seized upon the Marquisate of Saluzzo. Hitherto he had held nearly undisturbed possession of it, but Henry, now that he was relieved from the pressure of foreign and domestic hostility, resolved to recover a territory which was of importance from its affording a passage into Italy. For the same reason, the duke was anxious to retain it; he could not see without apprehension and disgust a powerful neighbour constantly posted within a few miles of his capital. In the hope of prevailing on Henry to cede the marquisate to him, the duke adopted the plan of visiting the French court. Charles Emmanuel had seductive manners, and a ready eloquence, and he concealed profound dissimulation under the semblance of openness and sincerity. Henry, however, though he treated him with an almost ostentatious kindness and pomp, was inflexible

on the main point, and the duke found himself under the necessity of signing a disadvantageous treaty.

But Charles Emmanuel had not relied solely on the policy or the generosity of Henry; he knew that the embers of disaffection were still alive in some of the French nobles, and he hoped to fan them into a flame which should scorch the monarch. To win the discontented to his side, he scattered with a lavish hand his largesses, under the disguise of presents. Though from some of those whom he tempted he failed to procure an explicit avowal of their sentiments, he doubted not that they might be reckoned upon in case of an explosion; others spoke out more plainly; and Biron threw himself unreservedly into the arms of the wily Savoyard. It was partly, perhaps, by ministering to the marshal's wants, but much more by rousing his wrath against the king, that the duke succeeded in making him a traitor. He artfully communicated to him some depreciating language which Henry was said to have used, and the vain and passionate Biron no longer hesitated to cast off his allegiance. The reward of his treason was to be the sovereignty of Burgundy, and the hand of one of Charles Emmanuel's daughters. Yet at the moment when he was rushing headlong into rebellion, he publicly refused to accept a present of two fine horses from the Duke of Savoy; assigning as the reason, that it would not become him to receive gifts from a prince between whom and his own sovereign there were differences existing. Thus hypocrisy was added to the list of his vices.

Imagining that the succour which he expected from the Spanish court, and the movements of the French malcontents, would render it impossible for Henry to attack him, Charles Emmanuel, on his return to Turin, refused to

carry the treaty into effect. Henry determined, therefore, to resort to force. To Biron, of whose fidelity he did not yet doubt, he offered the command of the army; and the marshal, in order to avoid suspicion, was compelled to accept it. All that, without betraying himself, he could do to shun success, he did. But the Duke of Savoy, relying on his intrigues, had left his fortresses scantily provided with the means of defence, and they consequently made only a feeble resistance, in spite of Biron's wishes and faulty measures. It was a fatal circumstance for the Savoyard prince, that the power of Spain was palsied by the recent accession of the contemptible Philip the third. Had the second Philip been alive, the viceroy of Milan, the Count de Fuentes, a deadly foe of Henry, would probably have led his numerous forces from the Milanese, and made the contest something like what the duke had vauntingly threatened to make it, "a forty years' affair." As it was, Fuentes could only recommend to Biron, to seize the king and send him to Spain, "where," said he, contemptuously, "he shall be well treated, and we will divert him with dancing, and banqueting among the ladies." Biron shrank from this step, yet, in one of his furious outbreaks of passion, he meditated a fouler crime. At the siege of fort St. Catherine, knowing that the king was about to visit the trenches, he sent a message to the governor, to point his cannon in a certain part of them, and to place in another a company of musketeers, who were to fire when a signal was given. But he quickly repented of his purpose, and kept the king from approaching the perilous spots.

Though the marshal renounced the base idea of becoming the murderer of his sovereign, he did not renounce his plots against him. La Fin was still employed in

negotiating for him with the Count de Fuentes, and a second treaty was agreed upon at Milan. It was arranged that the Duke of Savoy should sign a peace, which, however he was to break as soon as the French armies were withdrawn, and the Spanish troops were ready; that the Spanish monarch should give to the marshal the title of his lieutenant-general, and secure to him Burgundy, and a princess of Spain or Savoy; and that, in case of the war being unsuccessful, he should be indemnified for his loss by the payment of twelve hundred thousand golden crowns, and an annuity of a hundred and twenty thousand.

By this time the suspicions of Henry began to be awakened with regard to Biron. There were many circumstances which conspired to rouse them; not one of the least of which was the incomprehensible apathy of the Duke of Savoy; who, as he scarcely made an effort to defend himself, must be supposed to look for deliverance by some unknown means. Rumours, too, began to be spread of dark and dangerous intrigues; and it is probable, that the manner in which the military operations were conducted by the marshal, so unlike his wonted vigour, was not unremarked. All this appears to have induced Henry to refuse to give the government of the citadel of Bourg to Biron, who urgently requested it. There can be no doubt that Biron wished to be master of this citadel, solely to enable him the better to act in concert with Charles Emmanuel; yet he considered as an inexpiable insult the king's refusal to grant it.

No longer doubting that the marshal had become entangled in dangerous projects, and anxious to save a man whom he loved, Henry took the step of coming to a personal explanation with him. Taking Biron aside, in the cloister of the Cordeliers, at Lyons, he questioned him

as to the purpose and cause of the correspondence which he carried on with the enemies of the state, promising, at the same time, a full pardon for all past errors. Thus caught by surprise and pressed, the marshal could not wholly deny his fault, but he described it so as to make it appear only venial, suppressed everything that it was important for the king to know; and affirmed that, though he was tempted by the prospect of marrying a princess of Savoy, he should never for a moment have wavered in his duty had he not been refused the government of the citadel of Bourg. Without seeking to penetrate deeper into the mystery, Henry embraced him, and said, "Well, marshal, do you think no more about Bourg, and for my part, I will never remember what has occurred." The king, however, hinted that a relapse would be productive of dangerous effects.

In the following year, 1601, Biron was sent as ambassador to England, to announce to Elizabeth the marriage of Henry. He was accompanied by the Counts of Auvergne and Châteauroux, the Marquis de Créqui, and a splendid train of a hundred and fifty gentlemen. Elizabeth received him in the most flattering manner; but there was one of her conversations with him which might well have excited ominous thoughts in his mind. Essex had recently suffered. Speaking of that nobleman, she said, "I raised him to the most eminent dignities, and he enjoyed all my favour; but the rash man had the audacity to imagine that I could not do without him. His too prosperous fortune and his ambition rendered him haughty, perfidious, and the more criminal from his having seemed to be virtuous. He suffered a just punishment; and if the king my brother would take my advice, he would act at Paris as I have done here. He ought to sacrifice

to his safety all the rebels and traitors. God grant that his clemency may not prove fatal to him. For my part, I will never show any mercy to those who dare to disturb the peace of the realm." Biron must surely have felt his heart sink within him, when he heard this language, which, in all ways, was so applicable to himself. It is said, and we may easily believe it, that he omitted to mention this speech, when he gave an account of his embassy.

The forbearance of Henry, and the lesson of Elizabeth, were alike powerless to check the downward career of the infatuated Biron. His treasonable practices were still persevered in. After his return from England, he was sent as ambassador to Soleure, to ratify a treaty with the Swiss, and, on his way thither, he had a four hours' conversation with Watteville, the Duke of Savoy's agent. Instead of proceeding to Paris, to render an account of his mission, he stayed at Dijon, the capital of his government, where the violent and insulting language in which he spoke of the king, gave abundant proof that little reliance could be placed upon his fidelity. In the meanwhile, various parts of the kingdom, particularly Poitou, the Limousin, and Périgord, in the last of which provinces the marshal had numerous partisans and vassals, were thrown into a ferment by insidious reports of Henry's tyrannical intentions. Among the nobles, also, discontent was at work; the Duke of Bouillon and the Count of Auvergne were the principal malcontents. The provinces Henry quieted by the kindness which he displayed, in a journey through them; the nobles were not so easily to be reclaimed. It was obvious that a speech which the Duke of Savoy made, after his leaving France, was not a mere idle vaunt. His friends rallying him on his failure,

and alluding to the season at which he came home, told him that he had brought nothing but mud back from France. "If I have put my feet into the mud," replied the duke, "I have put them in so far, and have left such deep marks behind, that France will never efface them."

While, within the kingdom, men's minds were in this uneasy state, the news from without was by no means consolatory. Philip Dufresne Canaye, the French ambassador at Venice, was laudably active in procuring information of all movements among the Italian powers by which his country might be affected. He learned that, while throughout Italy the utmost pains were taken to blacken the character and depreciate the resources of Henry, French subjects, disguised, were busy at Turin and Milan, and that they had frequent nocturnal interviews with the ministers of the two courts. He described minutely the features, demeanour, and dress of these emissaries, and offered to have one of them seized, and carried off to France, if a small remittance were sent to him. Some strange lethargy seems to have come over the king and the French ministry at this moment; for they not only refused the money which was required, but even failed to send that which was indispensable for the payment of his spies.

From this ill-timed slumber they would probably have been startled up by a fatal explosion, had not the catastrophe been averted by a disclosure of nearly all that related to the plot which had so long been carried on. The terrible secret was divulged by that very La Fin who had so largely contributed to lead Biron astray. La Fin's first feeling of alienation from the great conspirator is supposed to have arisen out of the only act for which, during a considerable period, the marshal had been deserving of

praise. From Biron's sudden abandonment of the plan to kill the king, in the trenches of fort St. Catherine, his confidant drew the conclusion that his firmness was not to be relied upon, and that consequently, at some time or other, he might bring ruin npon those who were connected with him. That he might have the means of shielding himself in case of such an event, he immediately began to preserve all the papers that passed through his hands; and when the marshal desired him to burn any of them before his face, he, by a dexterous sleight, contrived to throw others into the fire in their stead.

Still La Fin continued to be employed in his perilous office of a negotiator. It is probable however that, now his fears were excited, and it was become a main object with him to keep open a door for escape, he did not display the same alacrity and zeal as before. Biron did not suspect him, but the more cautious and penetrating Count de Fuentes did; and his suspicions are said to have been strengthened by some words which dropped from La Fin. Those suspicions the count took especial care to conceal from the person who had inspired them. "Dead men," says the proverb, "tell no tales;" and the case is much the same with men entombed alive in a dungeon. Fuentes thought it prudent to provide against the danger of a betrayal, by getting rid of La Fin. In order to effect this, he found a pretext for requesting him to pass through Piedmont, on his way to France. Either La Fin had some misgiving as to the intention of the Spanish viceroy, or chance served him well; for, instead of going himself to Turin, he took the road through Switzerland, and sent Renazé, his confidential secretary, to the Duke of Savoy. Renazé was immediately arrested, and carried to the castle of Chiari. It was in vain that La Fin strove to interest the

marshal in behalf of the secretary; Biron spoke coldly of the captive, as a man who must be sacrificed for the safety of the rest; and he is said even to have advised his confidant to take secret measures for effectually silencing all who had been the companions of his travels, or could give any clue to his proceedings. Already, though he seems not to have had the slightest idea that La Fin would be unfaithful to him, he had deemed it politic to transfer his dangerous confidence to the Baron de Luz, his cousin, and two subordinate agents. Of this La Fin obtained information; and it did not tend to quiet his fears. It might be thought advisable to make him share the fate of Renazé. But, even supposing this not to happen, he saw plainly that the violent conduct of Biron towards the king must inevitably soon bring matters to extremities, and that, if the conspirators failed, which it was highly probable they would, his own life would be periled beyond redemption. His nephew, the vidame of Chartres, was also urgent with him to secure his head while there was yet an opportunity.

La Fin at length passed the Rubicon. He made known to the king that he had momentous secrets to communicate. In reply, he was told, that he should be rewarded for this service; but he stipulated only for pardon, and it was readily granted. The whole of the proofs of Biron's guilt were then placed by him in the hands of Henry, who was deeply afflicted by these convincing testimonies of the marshal's treason.

Justice seems to be degraded, and almost to change its nature, when its purpose is attained by fraudulent means. The net was spread for Biron, but in quieting his fears, and luring him into it, a scene of trickery and falsehood was exhibited, which cannot be contemplated without pain. Sully had set a better example, by a stratagem

which is not amenable to censure. To prevent Biron from maintaining a war in Burgundy, the minister prudently withdrew from the fortresses of that province the greatest part of the cannon and gunpowder, on the plea that the former were damaged and ought to be recast, and the latter was weakened by age, and must be re-manufactured, and he took care not to replace them. The right arm of Biron's strength was thus cut off. The marshal, nevertheless, might still take flight; he had more than once evaded a summons to confer with Henry; and it was of primary importance to secure his person. As alarm might be excited by La Fin journeying to court, he was instructed to write to the marshal, that the king had required his presence, that he could not refuse to comply without giving rise to surmises; and that nothing should drop from his lips which could prejudice his friend. In the allusions which it made, and the caution which it recommended, the reply of Biron furnished additional evidence of his guilt. The monarch, too, played his part in the deception. To the Baron de Luz, who had been sent from Burgundy to observe what was going on, and was about to return to that province, he spoke of the marshal in terms of kindness, and declared that his heart was lightened by a conversation which he had held with La Fin, as it proved that many of the charges brought against Biron were wholly unfounded. La Fin, at the same time, assured the marshal that the king was entirely satisfied, and would receive him with open arms. Deluded by these artifices, Biron determined to join Henry at Fontainebleau, notwithstanding that the incredulous de Luz, and others of his adherents, strenuously endeavoured to dissuade him. Various circumstances, ominous of evil, are said to have preceded his departure. On his road he

received more than one warning from his well-wishers, but he spurned them all, and proceeded to Fontainebleau. As he was descending from his horse, he was saluted by the traitorous La Fin, who whispered, "Courage and wary speech, my master! they know nothing." His belief in these words consummated the ruin of Biron.

In spite of Biron's faults, the heart of Henry still yearned towards him. Though he could not greet the offender with his customary warmth and frankness, he received him graciously, and led him through the palace pointing out the improvements which had been made. At length he touched upon the delicate subject of the marshal's deviation from the path of duty. He hinted that he had incontrovertible proof, but assured him that an honest confession would cancel everything, and replace him on the summit of favour. Misled by his pride, and the fatal mistake that his secret was safe, Biron, instead of seizing this opportunity to extricate himself from danger, was mad enough to assume the lofty tone of conscious and wronged innocence; studiously cold in his general manner, he sometimes verged upon insolence, and he loudly declared, that he came not to justify his conduct, but to demand vengeance upon those who had slandered him, or, if need were, to take it. Twice more, in the course of the day—once in person, and once through Biron's friends, the count of Soissons—Henry renewed his efforts, and was haughtily repulsed. On the morrow the monarch returned to the charge, and made other two attempts to save the marshal from the gulf which was opening to receive him. Oblivion for the past, friendship for the future, were earnestly offered to his acceptance. But Biron was like the deaf adder; he even broke out into a fit of passion on being pressed for the last time; and Henry was reluctantly compelled to resign him to his fate.

It is probable that the king would have borne with Biron for a while longer, had not the terrors, entreaties, and tears of his consort, impelled him to decisive measures. Mary of Medicis believed, that it was a part of the policy of Spain to cut off the royal family, and she shuddered at the idea of what, in the case of a minority, might happen to herself and her offspring from the hostility of a man who was in all ways so formidable as Biron. The king himself had already betrayed the same apprehension to Sully. After having, in melancholy terms, confessed his lingering affection for the marshal, he added, "But all my dread is, that were I to pardon him, he would never pardon me, or my children, or my kingdom." The gates of mercy were in consequence shut upon the dangerous criminal.

Biron had been in the habit of contemptuously reflecting upon the character of Essex, for what he considered as a cowardly surrender, and of maintaining that a man of spirit ought rather to suffer himself to be cut to pieces, than run the risk of dying by the headsman's axe. The time was now come when it was to be seen whether he could practise his own doctrine. It was midnight when he quitted the presence of the king. Everything had been prepared for his arrest, and that of the Count of Auvergne, who was suspected of sharing in the treason. The latter nobleman was taken into custody by Praslin, at the palace gate. No sooner had Biron passed out of the antechamber than Vitry, the captain of the guard, seized the marshal's arm, informed him that he was a prisoner, and demanded his sword. At first he supposed it to be a jest; and, when he was undeceived, he desired to see the king, that he might deliver the weapon into his hands. He was told that Henry could not be seen, and

his sword was again required. "What!" exclaimed he furiously, "take the sword from me, who have served the king so well! My sword, which ended the war, and gave peace to France! Shall the sword which my enemies could not wrest from me be taken by my friends!" At length he submitted. When he was led along the gallery, through a double line of guards, he imagined that he was going to execution, and he wildly cried out, "Companions! give me time to pray to God, and put into my hand a firebrand, or a candlestick, that I may at least have the comfort to die while I am defending myself." When, however, he found that he was in no instant danger, he meanly endeavoured to irritate the soldiers against the king, by saying to them, "You see how good Catholics are treated!" He passed a sleepless and agitated night, pacing about his chamber, striking the walls, raving to himself, and occasionally to the sentinels, pouring forth invectives and imprecations, and sometimes with singular imprudence striving to seduce a valet-de-chambre of the king, who watched him, to write to his secretaries, directing them to keep out of the way, and to maintain, in case of their being taken and questioned, that he never had carried on any correspondence in cipher.

From Fontainebleau the prisoners were conveyed by water to the Bastile. During the passage, Biron was lost in gloomy reverie, and when he entered within the walls of the prison his mind was racked with the worst forebodings. Nor were the circumstances attendant on his abode in the Bastile at all of a nature to raise his spirits. Placed in the chamber whence the constable St. Pol had passed to the scaffold, watched with lynx-eyed vigilance, and so carefully kept from weapons that he was allowed only a blunted knife at his meals, he could

not help exclaiming, "This is the road to the Grêve." While he was in this disturbed state, superstitious weakness is said to have lent its aid to complete his distraction. He was told that the Parisian executioner was a native of Burgundy; and it instantly flashed into his recollection that having shown to la Brosse, an astrologer, his own horoscope under another person's name, the wizard predicted the beheading of the person; and that César, a pretended magician, of whom more will be seen in the next chapter, had said, that "a single blow given behind by a Burgundian would prevent him from attaining royalty." The shock seems for the moment to have utterly deprived him of his senses. Refusing to eat, or drink, or sleep, he incessantly raved, threatened, and blasphemed. A visit from the Archbishop of Bourges, who came to offer the consolations of religion, and who gave him some hopes of mercy on earth, rendered Biron less violent. At the prisoner's request, Villeroi and Silleri, two of the king's ministers, also visited him; and, either that his brain was still wandering, or that he thought to establish a claim to pardon by appearing to make important discoveries, or that he was prompted by a malignant wish to involve in his own ruin those whom he hated, he is said to have charged, and in the strongest terms, a number of innocent persons with being engaged in treasonable practices. Whatever was his motive, his purpose was frustrated; Henry did not thirst for blood; and it has been remarked, that the documents which, on the trial, were brought forward against the culprit, were not those that most forcibly criminated him, but those which criminated him alone.

While Biron was thus the sport of his unruly passions, his friends were actively employed in endeavouring to

save him. Henry had returned to the capital, amidst the shouts and congratulations of his subjects. Soon after his arrival, many of the nobles, some of whom were of Biron's nearest kindred, waited upon the king to intercede for the criminal. The Duke of la Force was their spokesman; he spoke on his knees and, though Henry desired him to rise, he retained that posture. He pleaded the services of the culprit and his father, the Divine command to forgive our enemies, the pardon which the king had extended to others, and especially the deep indelible stain which would be thrown upon the family by a public execution; and, as far as was possible, he laboured to extenuate the marshal's guilt, by representing that it arose from the warmth of his temper, and had never been carried beyond mere intention. There was one point in the duke's speech which it was, perhaps impolitic in him to urge; that in which he stated himself to speak in the name of a hundred thousand men, who had served under Biron. This was begging too much in the style of the Spanish beggar in Gil Blas, and was not calculated to propitiate a man like Henry.

The monarch answered temperately, and even kindly, but with due firmness. Reminding them that he did not resemble some of his predecessors, who would not suffer parents to sue for their children on such an occasion, he declared, that the mercy for which they asked would in fact be the worst of cruelty. He alluded to the love which he had always borne to Biron, and told them, that had the offence been only against himself he would willingly have forgiven it, and did forgive it as far as related to his person, but that the safety of his children and of the whole kingdom was implicated, and he must perform his duty to them. With respect to the disgrace which it was

feared would attach to the relatives of the culprit, he treated the fear as a visionary one; he was, he said, himself descended from the constable St. Pol and the Armagnacs, who suffered on a scaffold, yet he did not feel dishonoured. In conclusion, he assured them that, far from depriving the marshal's kindred of the titles and offices which they possessed, he was much more inclined to add to the number, so long as they continued to serve the state with fidelity and zeal.

The king having authorised the parliament to proceed to trial, a deputation from that body, with the first president Harlay at its head, went to the Bastile, to take the necessary examinations, and confront the witnesses. With only one exception, which exception the internal evidence supplied by the papers soon obliged him to retract, Biron recognised all the letters and memorials which were shown to him; but he strove to put an innocent construction upon them, and as they were written in a studiously ambiguous style, he might have thrown doubts upon the subject, had they been unsupported by oral testimony. In this stage of the business, he was asked what was his opinion of La Fin? Still believing that person to be true to him, he replied that he was "an honourable gentleman, a good man, and his friend." The depositions of La Fin were then read, and he was brought face to face with the prisoner. The marshal now burst out into the most furious abuse of the man whom, but a moment before, he had declared to be his honourable and worthy friend. "O good God!" exclaims a contemporary chronicler, "what said he, and what did he not say! With what more atrocious revilings could he have torn to pieces the character of the most execrable being in the world! With what more horrible protestations, with what more terrible

oaths, could he have called upon men, angels, and God himself, to be the witnesses and judges of his innocence!" La Fin, however, stood his ground against the storm of invective; and supported his evidence by corroborative circumstances, and additional documents in the prisoner's hand-writing. It seemed as though everything conspired against Biron at this dreadful moment. "If Renazé," said he, "were here, he would prove La Fin to be a liar." To his utter surprise and consternation, the witness whom he had invoked, but whom he imagined to be dead, was suddenly brought forward, and amply confirmed the whole of La Fin's story. On the very day that Biron was arrested, Renazé contrived to escape from the castle of Chiari, and he now sealed the fate of the marshal. Driven to his last resource, Biron pleaded the pardon which was granted to him at Lyons, and protested that, since he received it, he had never entertained any criminal designs. In this plea he was no less unfortunate than in the others. From his own incautious avowal, it was gathered that he did not make a full confession to the king; and one of his letters showed that he had continued to plot for many months after the monarch had forgiven him.

The preliminary proceedings being completed, three days were occupied by the parliament in going over the mass of evidence, and hearing the summing up of the attorney-general. The courts of justice, in those times, always commenced their sittings at an early hour. Between five and six o'clock on the morning of the fourth day, Biron, closely guarded, was taken by water to the hall of the parliament, where a hundred and twelve of the members were in waiting to receive him; the peers had unanimously refused to sit upon his trial. At the sight

of this array of judges he changed colour, but he soon recovered his self-possession, and is said to have assumed a kind of theatrical air which was scarcely decorous. A contemporary describes him as rudely bidding the chancellor speak louder, and as "putting forward his right foot, holding his mantle under his arm, with his hand on his side, and raising his other hand to heaven, and smiting his breast with it, whenever he called upon God and the celestial beings to be witnesses of his integrity in the service of the king and kingdom."

The whole of the crimes attributed to him had been arranged under five heads, concerning which he was interrogated by the chancellor. The questioning and defence of Biron lasted between four and five hours, and it must be owned that, in this final struggle for life and reputation, he made a noble stand. Though, in the course of a long speech, he sometimes became entangled in contradictions, its general tenor was well calculated to produce a favourable effect; at moments he was even eloquent, and worked strongly on the feelings of his auditors. Much he denied, and what he could not deny he palliated; with respect to the treasons charged against him, he was, he said, the seduced and not the seducer; a man not deliberately wicked, but led astray by hateful intriguers, who wrought his violent passions into frenzy, by representing that the monarch had undervalued and insulted him—a representation which seemed to be confirmed by his being refused the government of Bourg; he pleaded that his errors had gone no further than intention, that they had been fully and freely pardoned, and had never been repeated; he urged his numerous and eminent services as a counterbalance to his faults, and the mercy which had uniformly been shown to far worse offenders

as a reason why it should be extended to him; and he repelled, as an infamous calumny, the accusation of having intended to bring about the death of Henry—yet, imprudent as such language was, he could not forbear from broadly hinting that the monarch was fickle, unjust, and cruel: "I rely more upon you, gentlemen," said he, "than I do upon the king, who, having formerly looked on me with the eyes of his affection, no longer sees me but with the eye of his hatred, and thinks it a virtue to be cruel to me, and a fault to exercise towards me an act of clemency." At the close of his speech, few of his hearers were unmoved, but all were unconvinced.

The most curious part of his defence is yet to be mentioned. If he did not spare his sovereign, it is not to be supposed that he would spare La Fin. Whenever he mentioned him he could not restrain his fury, but gave vent to a flood of abuse. Coining, and an unnatural regard for Renazé, were among the numerous crimes which he imputed to him. Strange that he did not perceive the folly of thus vituperating a man, whom he had so recently recognized as his honourable and worthy friend, and whose sins, if they really existed, he must then have known! But this was not all. For his vindication he mainly trusted to one plea—that he had not been a free agent, that he was under the irresistible influence of La Fin, who was a sorcerer, and had dealings with the devil. He averred, seriously, that La Fin was in the habit of breathing on him, biting his ear, and kissing his left eye, and calling him his master, his lord, his prince, and his king; that whenever his eye was kissed he felt a tendency to do evil; that the magician also enchanted him by making him drink charmed waters; and that he showed him waxen images which moved and spoke, and one of

which pronounced, in Latin, the words, "Impious king, thou shalt perish!" "If by magic he could give voice to an inanimate body," said he, "is it wonderful that he should have such power over me as to bend my will to an entire conformity with his own?"

Deceived by the compassion which some of his judges had manifested, Biron cherished the flattering hope of an acquittal. His spirits were so elated by this idea, that he amused himself with repeating to his guards various portions of his defence, and mimicking the gestures and speeches which he supposed the chancellor to have made in the course of the subsequent proceedings. His vanity, too, contributed to buoy him up. He ran over, in conversation, the list of French commanders, found some defect in each of them, and thence concluded that, as his military talents were obviously indispensable to the state, his life was secure.

The termination of that life was, nevertheless, rapidly approaching. By an unanimous vote, on the day after his appearance at their bar, the parliament pronounced Biron guilty of high treason, and condemned him to lose his head on the Grêve. The place of execution was changed by the king to the interior of the Bastile, at the request, it was said, of the criminal's friends; but partly, perhaps, in the fear that a popular commotion might occur, and partly because a report was spread, that some of his domestics intended to throw a sword to him on the scaffold, that he might at least have the chance of dying an honourable death. It was wise not to run the risk of encountering his despair.

The first intimation which Biron received of his impending doom, was from seeing that crowds were gathering together in the neighbourhood of the Bastile.

The change of time and place had not been publicly made known. "I am sentenced! I am a dead man!" he instantly exclaimed. He then sent a messenger to Sully, to request that he would come to him, or would intercede with the king. With these requests Sully declined to comply, but he desired the messenger to leave the marshal in doubt as to the king's intention. On the following morning, the last day of July, 1602, the chancellor, accompanied by some of his officers, proceeded to the Bastile, to read the sentence to him, and announce its immediate execution. Biron was at the moment deeply engaged in calculating his nativity. When he was taken down to the chancellor, he addressed him in an unconnected rhapsody of prayers, lamentations, invectives, and reproaches, intermingled with protestations of innocence, and vaunts of the services which he was yet capable of rendering to the state. He besought that he might be suffered to live, even though it were in prison and in chains! It was a considerable time before the chancellor could obtain a hearing, and he was speedily interrupted by sallies of rage from the marshal, who reproached him with hardness of heart, execrated La Fin, accused the king of being revengeful, and the parliament of injustice in not having allowed sufficient time for his vindication, and, finally, asserted that he was put to death because he was a sincere Catholic.

This burst of insane passion was succeeded by a lucid interval, during which he calmly dictated his will, sent tokens of remembrance to his friends, and distributed in alms the money which he had about him. The reading of some parts of his sentence again roused his irritable feelings. When he heard the charge of having intended to destroy the king, he exclaimed, "That is false! blot it

out!" and when the Grêve was mentioned, he declared that no power on earth should drag him thither, and that he would sooner be torn to pieces by wild horses than submit to such an indignity. He was quieted by being told of the change which had been made; but when it was hinted to him that his arms must be bound, he relapsed into such violence that it was thought advisable to leave his hands at liberty. He then made his confession to the priest; and it was remarked that he, who had just before boasted of being a good Catholic, was ignorant of the commonest forms of prayer, prayed more like a soldier than a Christian, and seemed to be thinking less of his salvation than of the things of this world.

It being now near five o'clock, the hour which was appointed for the execution, he was informed that he must descend into the court of the prison. As he was quitting the chapel, he caught sight of the executioner. "Begone!" vociferated he: "touch me not till it is time; if you come near me till then, I swear that I will strangle you!" He twice repeated the command and the threat when he was at the scaffold. Looking round on the soldiers, he mournfully said, "Would but some one of you fire his musket through my body, how thankful I should be! What misery it is to die so wretchedly, and by so shameful a blow!" The sentence was then read again, and again he lost all patience at being accused of planning Henry's death. It was with much difficulty that the clerk of the parliament completed the reading of the sentence, his voice being almost drowned by the clamour of the prisoner. Thrice Biron tied a handkerchief over his eyes, and as often he tore it off again, and once more he vented his rage on the executioner, who had maddened him by wishing to cut off his hair behind. "Touch

me not," he cried, "except with the sword. If you lay hands on me while I am alive, if I am driven into a fury, I will strangle half the folks that are here, and compel the rest to kill me." So terrible were his looks and his tone, that several of the persons present were on the point of taking flight. It was believed that he meditated seizing the death-sword, but the executioner had prudently desired his attendant to conceal it till it was wanted. At last, after long delay, the marshal requested Baranton, one of the officers of the Bastile, to bandage his eyes and tuck up his hair; and, when this was done, he laid his head upon the block. "Be quick! be quick!" were his last words, and they were promptly obeyed. They were scarcely out of the mouth of the speaker when the sword descended, and by a single blow Biron ceased to exist.

The remains of Biron were interred in the church of St. Paul. Not only was his funeral followed by multitudes, but multitudes visited the church afterwards, for the purpose of sprinkling his grave with holy water. "Never was there a tomb," says de Thou, "on which so much holy water was poured; a circumstance rather disagreeable to the court, which was vexed to see that a step which all ought to have deemed necessary for the safety of the king and state, was so wrongly interpreted as to become a subject of public dissatisfaction."

Almost the last wish of Biron was for vengeance on La Fin; the wish was gratified. After a lapse of four years, La Fin ventured to visit Paris. In the middle of the day, and in the centre of the capital, he was attacked by twelve or fifteen well-mounted men who unhorsed him, and stretched him on the ground, weltering in his blood. Several passengers were killed or wounded by the random firing. The perpetrators of this deed, though not unknown,

were never brought to justice. La Fin himself was undeserving of pity; but his murderers, even had he been the only victim, ought to have been shortened by the head.

Faithless to a sovereign who had lavished kindness and honours upon him, borne with his caprices and errors, and more than once saved his life on the field of battle, Biron was rightfully punished; but the severity which, on very slight grounds of suspicion, was shown to René de Mare, sieur de Monbarot, seems to impeach the justice of Henry. When, however, we recollect that his mind was painfully agitated by the plots which were thickening round him, we may perhaps be inclined to pity rather than blame the monarch, that, in one instance, its natural bias towards lenity was turned aside.

In the bay of Douarnenez, off the Breton coast, there is an islet, called Tristin, or Frimeau, which commands the entrance to the harbour of Douarnenez. The government of it was held by the Baron de Fontanelles, who during the war of the League, had rendered himself notorious by his activity in plundering. Not being any longer able to gratify his rapacity in this manner, he sought for other resources, and hoped he had found them in becoming an accomplice of Biron, and in opening a negotiation with the Spaniards, to deliver up to them the island and the neighbouring town. This would have put Spain into possession of a very annoying post in Britanny. Fortunately his treason was discovered, and he was sentenced to be broken on the wheel. Three other persons, two of whom were Bretons, participated in his guilt, and the latter were executed.

Before the accomplices of Fontanelles were led to the scaffold, they were put to the torture; and, while they were writhing under that iniquitous infliction, something

dropped from them which was construed into an implication of Monbarot, who was governor of Rennes. Monbarot had done good service against the Duke of Mercœur, during the war of the League, and since the peace, he had made strenuous exertions to maintain the royal authority in Britanny. All this was, nevertheless, insufficient to save him from being suspected of treasonable designs, and immured in the Bastile.

Monbarot languished in prison for three years—and to a solitary captive years are ages. He would perhaps, have remained there during a much longer period, had not filial love been a persevering suitor for him. His only son repeatedly solicited the king to set his parent free; and, failing to obtain that boon, he entreated that he might be allowed to lighten his sorrows, by sharing his captivity. At length, Monbarot's enemies having failed to procure any proof whatever against him, he was liberated by Henry. But, though he was declared to be innocent, he was punished as though he were guilty. Instead of being, as far as was possible, compensated for three years of suffering, he was deprived of the government of Rennes, which was given to Philip de Bethune, Sully's younger brother. It is probable, indeed, that the persecution of Monbarot was set on foot for the sole purpose of wresting from him his coveted office.

Charles of Valois, Count of Auvergne, who was afterwards known as Duke of Angoulême, was a son of Charles the ninth, by Maria Touchet, and was born in 1573. He was admitted a knight of Malta, and became grand prior of France; but Catherine of Medicis having bequeathed to him the counties of Auvergne and Lauragais, he quitted the order of Malta, and married a daughter of the Constable Montmorenci. Charles was one of

the first to join Henry of Navarre, on the accession of that prince, and he fought valiantly for him at Arques, Ivry, and Fontaine Française. In the course of a few years, however, his loyalty evaporated, and we find him an accomplice of Biron. When he was arrested, his pleasantry and presence of mind did not forsake him. On Praslin demanding his sword, he laughingly said, "Here it is; it has never killed any thing but wild boars. If you had given me a hint of this business, I should have been in bed and asleep two hours ago." He preserved the same gay humour while he was in prison. In October be was released, after having disclosed the whole that he knew of the conspiracy. As, however, the king had procured the same information from other quarters, Auvergne would probably have been severely punished but for two favourable circumstances—he was the half brother of the king's mistress, the Marchioness of Verneuil, and he had been particularly recommended to him by Henry the third, when that monarch was on his death-bed.

A very short time elapsed before Auvergne was again involved in treasonable projects. His confederates were the Marchioness of Verneuil, her father, Francis de Balsac d'Entragues, and an Englishman named Thomas Morgan. The Duke of Bouillon, and other nobles, were also ready to lend their aid. The marchioness, who, in consequence of the promise of marriage which the king had given to her during the insanity of his passion, affected to consider herself as his wife, was irritated by the birth of a dauphin, which seemed to shut out the possibility of her son ever possessing what she called his right. D'Entragues was deeply wounded in his feelings, by the stain which Henry's licentious love for his daughter had cast upon him. Some

writers,—who appear to suppose that a French father could not think himself dishonoured by his child becoming a king's concubine,—throw doubts on the sincerity, of d'Entragues' indignation; but I can see no real grounds for their so doing. There is an air of sincerity, in what he says upon this subject, which is greatly in his favour. After touching upon the ingratitude with which his faithful services had been repaid, he adds, "Borne down by years and maladies, I was condemned to suffer more deadly blows from blind fortune. My daughter, the sole consolation of my old age, pleased the king, and this last stroke completed my misery. Grief aggravated my maladies, and still more intense mental anguish was joined to the pains which my body endured. I found myself exposed to all the gibes of the courtiers; and that which generally constitutes the happiness of a father, and which ought to have formed the glory and felicity of my family, was, on the contrary, the cause of my shame, of the dishonour of my house, and of the insulting scorn with which I was overwhelmed." As often as he implored for leave to withdraw from court he was refused, and at length he was forbidden to see his daughter. Not content with inflicting these wrongs upon him, Henry was striving to seduce his second daughter also. Assuredly if such injuries are not sufficient to rouse the wrath of a father, it is difficult to imagine what would be. That d'Entragues keenly felt them is certain; for he more than once endeavoured to intercept and kill the king, while he was on his way to the marchioness and to her sister, and Henry is said to have narrowly escaped. The design to assassinate is indefensible; but it at least proves that the father was in earnest. At a subsequent period, Henry said to d'Entragues, "Is it true, as is reported, that you meant to

kill me?" "Yes, Sire," replied the undaunted noble, "and the idea will never be out of my mind, while your majesty persists to blot my honour in the person of my daughter."

The particulars of the conspiracy are very imperfectly known. It is said the principal stipulations of the treaty with Spain were, that Philip should recognise as dauphin the natural son of Henry by the Marchioness of Verneuil, on her putting him into his hands; that, in the first instance, the mother and child should seek refuge at Sedan, under the protection of the Duke of Bouillon, and that subsequently five Portuguese fortresses should be ceded to them as places of security; and that France should be invaded on the frontiers of Champagne, Burgundy, and Provence, by the Marquis of Spinola, the Count of Fuentes, and the Duke of Savoy.

To the prosecution of Auvergne there were two obstacles, which arose out of the conduct of Henry. When the count was released from the Bastile, he offered to continue his correspondence with the Spanish court for the purpose of betraying its secrets to the king; and a regular authority for so doing was unwisely granted to him. It was base in Auvergne to make such a proposal, and scarcely less so in Henry to adopt it. By another act, the monarch gave him a fresh pretext for holding intercourse with a power which was thoroughly hostile at heart. Henry being attacked by a fit of illness, the marchioness, who had insulted Mary of Medicis beyond endurance, affected to feel, or perhaps felt, such extreme dread of what would befal her and her offspring in case of his death, that the king gave her half brother a written permission to negotiate an asylum for her in a foreign country. Cambray was the place which she and Auvergne

selected as the city of refuge; and this selection afforded them, while the negotiation was proceeding, an opportunity to carry on intrigues with the emissaries of Spain.

Apprehending, probably, that his treasonable duplicity would soon be detected, Auvergne, by challenging the Count of Soissons, artfully contrived to be banished from court. Soissons complained, and Henry, to satisfy him, exiled the challenger to the province whence he derived his title. This was what Charles of Valois had aimed at; for, in that province, his possessions, his popularity, and the rugged nature of the country, would contribute to secure him from danger. While he was there, a letter written by him to one of his friends at Paris, was intercepted; and though its language was obscure, it gave the king reason to believe that, under pretence of betraying Spain, the count was in reality plotting with it. Henry immediately summoned him to return to court. Auvergne was, however, aware of the reason and the danger. "It is only for the purpose of bringing my head to the scaffold," said he, "that I am called to Paris." The mere idea of being re-immured in "that great heap of stones," as he called the Bastile, made him shudder. Neither a safe-conduct, nor a formal pardon, which were offered to him, nor the assurances of several persons, whom the king sent to him, could remove his suspicions. To avoid being taken by surprise, he lived in the woods and the most solitary spots, and kept dogs and sentinels continually on the watch. Yet he was at last circumvented. His regiment of cavalry was purposely ordered to pass near his abode, and he could not deny himself the gratification of inspecting it. In this pleasure he thought he might safely indulge, as he was resolved that he would neither dismount nor be surrounded, and was on the back of a fleet horse,

that could gallop ten leagues without stopping. He was, nevertheless, adroitly seized, and carried off to the Bastile, where he was placed in the chamber that Biron had inhabited. On his way thither he had preserved his serenity, but, when he entered the chamber, the remembrance of his friend drew from him a few tears. He soon, however, recovered his equanimity, and jocosely told the governor, "there was no inn at Paris so bad that he would not rather go to bed in it, than in this building." As soon as Auvergne was secured, d'Entragues was arrested and lodged in the Concièrgerie, and the marchioness of Verneuil was placed under a guard in her own house.

The parliament was now directed to take cognizance of the plot. Henry, however, whose main object in all this was to render his haughty mistress more submissive, sent one of his confidential servants to make her an offer of pardon on certain conditions. He was repulsed, as he richly deserved to be. The marchioness disdainfully replied, that, as she had never committed a crime against the king, there was no room for a pardon. The trial accordingly proceeded. The conspirators defended themselves dextrously. Biron had been ruined partly by admitting, at the outset, the fair character and veracity of intended witnesses. The marchioness and the count at least avoided that rock, by manifesting an apparently bitter hostility to each other. As to d'Entragues, he censured them both; but his vindication principally consisted of a severe exposure and impeachment of Henry's conduct, with respect to himself, the marchioness, and her sister.

Though in a legal point of view, whatever they might be in a moral, the proofs against the prisoners were by

no means clear, the judges, on the 1st of February, 1605, found Auvergne, d'Entragues, and Morgan, guilty of high treason, and condemned them to lose their heads. The marchioness was sentenced to be confined in a monastery, while further enquiries were being made into her past proceedings. She was, however, soon after allowed to reside in her own house at Verneuil; and no long time elapsed before the king ordered that all enquiry into her acts should be discontinued. The punishment of the remaining offenders was next commuted. D'Entragues was exiled to his house at Malesherbes, Morgan was sent out of the kingdom, and Auvergne was doomed to remain in "that great heap of stones," which he so much abhorred.

Thus ended a farce which was eminently disgraceful to Henry, and for which he was justly censured. "It excited indignation," says de Thou, "to see the ministry of the most respectable tribunal in the realm profaned by a court intrigue. The king, it was said, had brought the marchioness to trial, not for the purpose of punishing her, nor to give an example which was equally necessary and full of equity, but that her father and brother, who had tried to withdraw her from the court, might be foremost in exhorting her to renew her connexion with a prince who madly loved her." To crown the whole, the monarch who, to secure more effectually a refractory mistress, had thus made a laughing-stock of the laws and the magistracy, speedily deserted that mistress, and transferred his fickle affections to Jacqueline de Beuil, whom he created Countess of Moret.

The death of Henry did not open the prison doors of the Count of Auvergne. He spent nearly twelve years in the Bastile. Happily for him, he had been well educated,

and though, while he was immersed in the debaucheries of an immoral court, he had lost sight of literature, his taste for it was not destroyed. He was therefore enabled to solace by study his long captivity; and we may believe that, when he once more emerged from his durance, reflection and added years had made him a wiser and a better man. He had need of consolation while he was incarcerated; for, the year after he was committed to the Bastile, he received another heavy blow. Queen Margaret instituted a suit, to recover from him the vast property which he derived from her mother, and the tribunal decided against him.

At last, in 1616, he was set free by Mary of Medicis, that he might assist in forming a counterpoise to the Condéan faction; and in 1619, he was created Duke of Angoulême. He subsequently served the state with honour, on various occasions, both as ambassador and general. His death took place in 1650.

Scarcely were the proceedings against Auvergne and his accomplices brought to a close before another conspiracy was discovered; it was the last which was formed, or rather, perhaps, which was made public, during the reign of Henry. The author of this plot was Louis d'Alagon, sieur de Merargues, a Provençal noble, nearly allied to some great families. We have seen that the Spaniards were desirous to obtain an Establishment on the Breton coast, which might be a thorn in the side of France. They now sought to gain a much more dangerous footing on the shore of the Mediterranean. The important city of Marseilles was the object which they coveted, and Merargues was the person on whom they reckoned to put it into their possession.

Almost the first step which Merargues took, after be-

coming a traitor, showed how unfit he was to act the part which he had chosen; he had all the will in the world to be a dangerous conspirator, and wanted only the talent. Some years before he had proposed to the king to keep two galleys ready for service, in order to secure the port of Marseilles; the plan was adopted, and as a recompence, he received the command of the vessels. In maturing this scheme, he derived much assistance from a galley-slave, who was a man of ability. To this man, whom he imagined to be entirely devoted to him, and capable of daring deeds, Merargues communicated his purpose of betraying Marseilles to the Spanish monarch. By means of the two galleys he considered himself to be master of the port; and he had no doubt of being elected to the office of Viguier, or Royal Provost, for the following year, which would give him full authority over the city and the forts.

In order to fathom to the bottom the project of Merargues, the wily galley-slave affected to lend a willing ear to the projector. He, however, deemed it more prudent to trust to the gratitude of his own sovereign for a reward, than to that of Philip of Spain. As soon as he had acquired a thorough knowledge of the particulars, he wrote to the Duke of Guise, offering to give information of the utmost importance, on condition of recovering his liberty. His offer was made known to the king by the duke, and was accepted. Guise was at the same time directed to keep the affair a profound secret, till decisive proof could be obtained against the criminal, and to take the necessary precautions for the safety of the city.

Merargues himself was not slow in furnishing the evidence which was wanted. He had already had various conferences with Zuniga, the Spanish ambassador, an

able and intriguing diplomatist, but his correspondence on the subject was principally carried on through Bruneau, the ambassador's secretary. Unconscious that his scheme was known to the French government, he now visited Paris, on a mission to the court, from the states of Provence; a mission which he no doubt readily undertook, that he might have an opportunity of making arrangements with his foreign confederates. By order of the king he was closely watched, and it was soon discovered that he had secret interviews with Zuniga and Bruneau. The latter was tracked to the abode of Merargues, and both of them were arrested. On the secretary, who tried in vain to draw his sword, was found a paper, which bore witness to the criminality of his purpose. Merargues, on being seized exclaimed, "I am a dead man! but if the king will spare my life, I will disclose great things to him!" He was conveyed to the Bastile, and Bruneau to the Châtelet.

No sooner did Zuniga learn the detention of his secretary than he demanded an audience of the king. It must excite a smile, to hear that he complained bitterly of heavy wrong, and assumed the lofty tone of offended dignity. In the face of the clearest evidence, he denied all sinister designs; and talked largely of the privilege of ambassadors being violated, and the law of nations set at nought—as if any privileges or law could exist authorizing an envoy to conspire in the very court of the monarch to whom he is deputed. Nor did he forget to recriminate upon the ministers of Henry, as being fomentors of revolution in the Spanish dominions, nor to throw out threats of hostility, in case redress were denied. Angered by the haughty language of Zuniga, Henry retorted with at least equal acrimony, and concluded by a peremptory refusal to

release Bruneau, till the question of his guilt or innocence had been thoroughly investigated. In the course of a few days, however, Bruneau was sent back to his master; but not before he had answered interrogatories, and been confronted with Merargues.

The fate of Merargues could not be doubtful. He was sentenced to be beheaded, and then quartered. As the culprit was related to the families of the Duke of Montpensier and the Cardinal de Joyeuse, the king sent to those personages to offer the commutation of the punishment into perpetual imprisonment. They, however, with a praiseworthy spirit replied that, though they were grateful for his kindness, they must decline to accept it; of all such villains they would, they said, be glad to see France cleared, and, although the criminal was their relative, they would do justice on him with their own hands, if there were no executioner to perform that duty. Merargues was in consequence executed, at the Grêve, and his head was sent to Marseilles, and exposed on the summit of one of the city gates.

On the same day that Merargues was led to the scaffold, the life of Henry was endangered by the violence of one John de Lisle, a madman. In the course of a few months another accident occurred; he narrowly escaped drowning, while crossing the ferry of Neuilly in his carriage. At the expiration of five years, treason accomplished its purpose, and the existence of this justly celebrated monarch was cut short by the knife of Ravaillac.

CHAPTER VI.

Reign of Louis XIII.—The treasure of Henry IV. dissipated—Prevalent belief in magic—Cesar and Ruggieri—Henry, Prince of Condé—The Marchioness d'Ancre - Marshal Ornano—Prevalence of duelling—The Count de Bouteville—The Day of the Dupes—Vautier, the physician of Mary of Medicis—The Marshal de Bassompierre—The Chevalier de Jars—Infamy of Laffemas—Three citizens of Paris sent to the Bastile—Despotic language of Louis XIII.—The Count de Cramail—The Marquis of Vitry—Peter de la Porte--Noel Pigard Dubois, an alchemical impostor—The Count de Grancé and the Marquis de Praslin—The Prince Palatine—Count Philip d'Aglie—Charles de Beys—Letter from an unknown prisoner to Richelieu.

The treasure deposited in the Bastile, by Henry IV., did not remain long undissipated after his death. It began to melt away, like snow in the sun, as soon as the regency of Mary of Medicis was commenced. Swarms of her favourites and dependants clamoured to obtain the reward of their sycophancy. Like the horse-leech's two-daughters, they were perpetually crying, "Give! Give!" and, had such personages existed in the days of Solomon, he might have added a fifth thing to the four which he describes as never saying "It is enough." Most prominent among the group were Concini and his wife; and as they were exceedingly unpopular, they endeavoured to silence the cry against them by stopping, at the public expense, the mouths of their most formidable censors. But it was not only her friends, as they called themselves, that Mary of Medicis had to satisfy; her enemies, and she had many, were to be bought off, and they sold their forbearance dearly. Fraud and shameless rapacity became universal. "Governors," says Anquetil, "called for guards which

they never enlisted, for augmentations of their garrisons, that they might gain something out of the pay, and fortifications, which often were useless. They themselves made the bargains, and, at the king's cost, managed matters with the contractors. Reversions were granted down to the third generation. Those who by this means were excluded, required drafts on the royal treasury. Nothing was more common than the doubling and trebling of salaries, from the highest office to the lowest. Some obtained dowries for their daughters, others the payment of their debts: so that it was a general pillage." To all this must be added, the loss sustained, and the injury done to every branch of industry, by the creation or revival of obnoxious tolls, privileges, and monopolies.

Thus the money accumulated by Henry was speedily squandered. After all, it was, perhaps, more innocently spent in this manner than it would have been in carrying on the wide-spreading war which he had planned to realise his chimerical projects. Some drops of the golden shower probably descended among the multitude; and myriads were not led forth to spill their blood in foreign lands. The real mischief in this case was, that, when the hoard was gone, the spirit of spending remained; and to satisfy that spirit new taxes and exactions were pitilessly imposed on a people whose burthens were already oppressive.

Having wholly lost his influence, Sully resigned many of his offices, and returned into private life. Among the places which he relinquished were the superintendence of the finances, and the government of the Bastile. He, however, did not make the sacrifice without taking especial care to be well remunerated for it. A million of livres, and a yearly pension of forty-eight thousand livres,

was his price. It is quite clear that the virtuous Sully did not think, like Pope, that "virtue *alone* is happiness below."

For the first four or five years of the regency of Mary of Medicis, the Bastile seems to have contained no prisoner of note. At the end of that time it received an individual, who, though he had no rank to boast of, professed to be in the service of a potent master. The belief in magic was almost general at that period. We have seen that Biron attributed his crimes to the influence of magic upon him. All the world was running mad, after charms, spells, and philtres; the boldest of the throng had a violent curiosity to see the devil. Among those who preyed upon the credulity of the crowd, history has preserved the names of two—one was called Cesar, the other was Ruggieri, a Florentine. It is to the extraordinary mode in which they are asserted to have quitted the world, that we are indebted for our knowledge of them.

Cesar is gravely stated to have had the power of calling down hail and thunder at his pleasure. He had a familiar spirit, and a dog, who seems to have been a sort of minor fiend, acting as messenger, to carry his letters, and bring back answers. Cesar was a manufacturer of love potions to make young girls enamoured of young men; and, on occasion, could help a cowardly enemy to destroy without risk the man whom he hated. It was charged against him that he had formed a charmed image for the purpose of making a gentleman waste away. This was a very common practice when sorcery and witchcraft were in vogue. But it seems probable that the crime which brought him to the Bastile was an indiscretion which he committed with respect to one of the gentle sex. He was

accustomed to attend the witches' sabbath; and he boasted that, at one of those unholy meetings, a great lady of the court had granted him the last favour which a female can bestow. Such a vaunt was well calculated to bring him into durance. It did that, and more. On the eleventh of March, 1615, all Paris was astonished, by learning that, in the dead of night, the devil had come, with a tremendous din, and strangled Cesar in his bed. Four days afterwards his satanic majesty, who appears to have wanted the services of two magicians at once, snatched away, in the same manner, the soul of the Florentine Ruggieri, who was then residing in the house of a French marshal. It is not difficult to account for these supposed supernatural events.

A curious description of the tricks which Cesar played upon his dupes is given by a contemporary author, who speaks in the character of the magician. The representation is probably correct. "You would hardly believe," says he, "how many young courtiers and young Parisians there are who teaze me to show them the devil. Finding this to be the case, I hit upon one of the drollest inventions in the world to get money. About a quarter of a league from this city, I found a very deep quarry, which has long ditches on the right and left hand. When anybody wants to see the devil, I take him into that; but before he enters, he must pay me forty or fifty pistoles at least; swear never to say a word of the matter; and promise not to be afraid, or call on the gods or demigods, or pronounce any holy word.

"All this being done, I enter the cavern first; then, before going further, I make circles, and involutions, and fulminations, and mutter some speech composed of barbarous words, which I have no sooner uttered than my

curious fool and I hear the rattling of heavy chains, and the growling of large mastiffs. Then I ask him if he is afraid; if he says yes (and there are many who dare not proceed), I lead him out again, and, having thus cured him of his impertinent curiosity, I pocket his money.

"If he is not afraid, I go forward, mumbling out some terrific words. When I have reached a particular spot, I redouble my incantations, and utter loud cries, as if I had gone frantically mad. Immediately six men, whom I keep hidden in the cavern, throw out flashes of flame, to the right and left of us, from burning rosin. Seen through these flames I point out to my inquisitive companion a monstrous goat, loaded with great heavy chains of iron, painted with vermilion, to look as though they were red hot. On each side, there are two enormous mastiffs, with their heads fastened into long wooden cases, which are wide at one end, and very narrow at the other. While the men keep goading them they howl with all their might, and this howling echoes in such a manner, through the instruments on their heads, that the cavern is filled with sounds so terrific that, though I know the cause of the hurlyburly, even my own hair stands on end. The goat, whom I have taught his lesson, plays his part so well, rattling his chains, and brandishing his horns, that there is nobody but what would believe him to be the devil in earnest. My six men, whom I have also thoroughly trained, are likewise loaded with red chains, and dressed like furies. There is no light in the cavern but what they now and then make with powdered rosin.

"Two of them, after having played the devil to perfection, now come to torment my poor curious gull, with long bags of cloth full of sand; with these they so belabour him all over his body, that I am at last obliged

to drag him out of the cavern half dead. Then, when he has come to himself a little, I tell him that it is a most perilous thing to wish to see the devil, and I beg that he will never indulge it in future; and I assure you that no one ever does after having been so double damnably beaten."

The year after the foul fiend had fetched away Cesar and Ruggieri, the Bastile was tenanted by an occupant of high rank—Henry, Prince of Condé, the second who bore that Christian name. Condé was born in 1588, and, till the birth of a dauphin, was presumptive heir to the throne of France. The prince was well educated, witty and pleasant in conversation, spoke several languages, and was better acquainted with literature and the sciences than most contemporary men of high birth; but his person was not attractive. It was probably the latter circumstance which induced Henry the fourth to unite him to Henrietta de Montmorenci, the loveliest and richest female of that time. Her inclinations leaned towards the handsome, gallant, and accomplished Bassompierre; but Henry, who was smitten with an extravagant passion for her, seems to have thought that he could more easily seduce her if she were the wife of Condé. He was mistaken. The prince, on whose "liking the chase a hundred thousand times better than he liked women," Henry had rather erroneously calculated, was not disposed to be dishonoured, even by a king who was his uncle. Henry, previous to the marriage, had, indeed, pledged his word that, on his account, the prince need have no fears; but Henry was not a man to be trusted in such cases. The nuptial knot was scarcely tied before the conduct of the monarch became such as to awake, and justify, all the jealous fears of the husband; who was further aggrieved by being com-

pelled to endure the contempt and insolence of Sully. To avoid the danger which hung over him, his sole resource was to fly the country with his wife; and he accordingly contrived to make his escape, and to obtain an asylum in the court of the Archduke Albert, at Brussels.

When Henry found that his intended prey was beyond his reach, his behaviour resembled rather that of a madman than of a sage monarch at the mature age of fifty-seven. He ran about asking advice of his courtiers, the ministers were summoned, councils were held, parties of troops were despatched to seize the fugitives, and war was threatened against Spain if she refused to give them up. When Sully was told of what had happened, he replied in a surly tone, "I am not astonished at it, sire; I foresaw it clearly and warned you of it; and had you taken my advice a fortnight ago, when he was going to Moret, you would have put him into the Bastile, where you would find him now, and where I should have kept a good watch over him for you." Such was the morality of the austere Sully! This "well-seeming Angelo," who has been praised, at least as much as he deserves, could be indignant at the idea of the monarch marrying Henrietta d'Entragues, his mistress; but he could see no dishonour in that monarch breaking his plighted word, as well as all moral obligations, by seducing the wife of his nephew; nor in he himself volunteering his assistance to forward an adulterous intercourse, by prompting the seizure of the injured husband, and becoming his gaoler!

It was not without reason that the prince dreaded to trust his wife within the corrupted atmosphere of the French court. Had she remained there, it appears certain that she must have fallen. As it was, her fidelity was, for a moment, on the point of being shaken. Henrietta

was little more than sixteen, and the glory of the sovereign, his boundless generosity to her, and his idolatrous fondness, dazzled her imagination so far that, while she was at Brussels, a correspondence was actually carried on between them. An attempt was made by Henry's emissaries to carry her off, but it failed. When d'Estrées, Marquis of Cœuvres, who conducted this attempt, was reproached for his baseness by Condé, his defence was, that he had acted upon orders from the king his master, and that it was his duty to execute them, whether they were just or unjust. Henrietta repaired her momentary error by her subsequent conduct.

Not believing himself to be safe, Condé removed to Milan, where he published a manifesto to justify his having quitted France. From policy he passed over in silence the main cause of his flight; but he indemnified himself by pouring forth all the bitterness of his resentment on Sully, whom he painted in the darkest colours. Some overtures were made to lure the prince back to France, but they were ineffectual. But, while Henry was preparing to carry war into the territory of his neighbours, he fell by the hand of an assassin, and the way was thus opened for the return of the prince.

Condé aspired to the regency, but his ambitious hopes were disappointed. Chagrined at the failure of some of his subsequent schemes, and the refusal of favours which he sought, the prince, with many of the nobles, took up arms against the court. For this, he and his adherents were declared guilty of treason. A peace was, nevertheless, patched up between the parties, and he returned to Paris in a sort of triumph.

Not more than a year elapsed before the obvious intention of Condé to monopolize all the power of the

state, compelled Mary of Medicis to venture upon decisive measures against him. Sully was active in prompting her to this step. The strength of the prince's party rendered the attempt hazardous; but the business was kept so secret, and was so ably managed, that he was arrested in the Louvre, and conveyed to the Bastile, without opposition. Here, and at Vincennes, he remained for three years, during part of which time he was harshly treated. It was not without much difficulty, and till he had been long confined, that his wife, who had become sincerely attached to him, was allowed to share his prison. His liberation was brought about by the fall of Concini, and he was reinstated in his honours. Thenceforth, he served Louis the thirteenth faithfully in the cabinet and the field. He died in 1646. Voltaire truly says, with respect to him, that his being the father of the great Condé was his greatest glory.

The downfall of Concini, Marshal d'Ancre, which opened the gates of the Bastile to let out Condé, opened them also to admit, for a short time, the wife of the murdered marshal. After Concini had been assassinated by Vitry and his accomplices, and his body had been dragged from the grave and torn into fragments by an ignorant and savage populace, Leonora, his widow, was hurried to prison. She was the daughter of a female by whom Mary of Medicis was nursed, and had been the playmate of the princess. When Mary became the consort of Henry IV., she took Leonora in her train to Paris. So attached was Mary to her, that Leonora is said, by Mezeray, "to have directed at her pleasure the desires, the affections, and the hatreds of the queen." Riches were, of course, heaped upon her. She is charged with having fomented the disagreements of Mary and her inconstant husband,

by making false statements, to excite the jealousy of her mistress. If she did so, which may be doubted, she was performing a work of supererogation; for Henry rendered falsehood unnecessary, by affording abundant and undisguised cause for complaint. The light of the sun was not more obvious than his conjugal infidelity. It was also objected, that she insolently shut her door against the princesses and nobles who came to pay court to her in the height of her power. If this be true, it proves only that she had spirit and good sense enough to despise the sycophancy of those by whom she knew herself to be detested. It is much in favour of Leonora's private character that Mary of Medicis was so firmly her friend; for, unlike the titled dames who surrounded her, Mary was a modest and virtuous woman. That the marshal and his partner fattened on the spoils of the state it would be folly to deny; but, mean and criminal as such conduct undoubtedly is, we must bear in mind that the crime was common to all the courtiers of that period. Every one was eager, as the French phrase expresses it, "to carry off a leg or a wing." It was envy, not abhorrence of robbing the public, that caused the destruction of Mary's favourites.

In France, to live upon the imposts squeezed from the people was not deemed an impeachable act, unless, perhaps, by those who had failed to get a share of the pillage; and consequently there was no legal ground for dragging the widow of Concini to the bar. But hatred is ingenious in finding means to effect its purpose. Having first been so effectually plundered by the police officers that she had not even a change of linen left, she was sent before a special commission, to be tried for Judaism and sorcery. Other charges were brought forward, but it is obvious

that they were only meant to increase the odium under which she was labouring. The trial was, throughout, a mockery of justice. Evidence the most trivial in some instances, and absurd in others, was produced to substantiate the charge of Judaism and sorcery. Some Hebrew books, which were found in her apartment, were gravely supposed to be used by her for necromantic purposes. "By what magic did you gain such an influence over the mind of the queen-mother?" was one of the questions put by her judges. "My only magic," replied the prisoner, "was the power strong minds have over weak ones"—a memorable reply, which goes far to prove that she was a woman of superior talent.

Though the judges had, no doubt, been selected for the purpose of ensuring her condemnation to death, it turned out that a mistake had been made with respect to some of them, and that they were not of the opinion of d'Estrées, who thought that the orders of a master ought to be executed whether they were just or unjust. Five of them absented themselves, and a few others voted for banishment. The majority, however, were faithful to their mission, and she was sentenced to be beheaded, and her remains burnt, and scattered to the winds. By the same sentence, her husband's memory was branded with infamy, her son was declared ignoble, and incapable of holding office or dignity; their mansion, near the Louvre, was ordered to be levelled with the ground, and all their property was confiscated.

On hearing this sentence, to which she was compelled to listen bareheaded, in the midst of an insulting crowd, nature for a moment prevailed in the bosom of Leonora, and she sobbed loudly. The disgrace of her son seems to have been more painful to her than even her own fate.

She soon, however, recovered herself, and became resigned to her doom. When she was led to execution, her deportment so won for her the respect of the multitude that not a syllable of reproach was heard. She looked firmly, yet without any theatrical affectation of heroism, on the block and the flaming pile; submitted to the blow without a murmur; and thus triumphantly vindicated her claim to the possession of a strong mind.

Having passed over an interval of seven years, after the judicial murder of the Marchioness d'Ancre, we find the Bastile receiving John Baptist Ornano, the son of a father who enjoyed and deserved the friendship of Henry IV. Ornano was born in 1581, and was not more than fourteen when he commanded a company of cavalry at the siege of la Fère. He subsequently served with distinction in Savoy and other quarters.

In 1619, Louis the thirteenth appointed him governor of Gaston, Duke of Anjou, the king's brother, who was presumptive heir to the throne. Gaston had, for some time, been under the care of the Count de Lude, than whom it would have been difficult to find a man more unfit for his office, unless he was chosen for the purpose of leading his pupil astray. Ornano, by a proper mixture of firmness and kindness, soon succeeded in perfectly acquiring the respect and affection of the prince. One part of the system, by which he purposed to break the bad habits of his youthful charge, is said to have consisted in awakening his ambition. With this view he dwelt upon the strong probability of the prince succeeding to the crown, and the necessity of making himself acquainted with affairs of state; and he taught him to believe, that he could gain such knowledge only by being admitted into the king's council. It may be supposed

that, in thus acting, Ornano was not without an eye to his own advancement and influence. La Vieville, however, who then ruled, did not wish to see Gaston in the council, and still less Ornano. He, therefore, persuaded Louis to remove the prince's governor, and send him into Provence. Ornano refused to resign, and he was punished by being sent to the Bastile, whence he was transferred to the castle of Caen.

Gaston remonstrated strongly against being deprived of his friend and preceptor; but his remonstrances would probably have been of little avail had not la Vieville been precipitated from power. Ornano was then released by the king, and was placed at the head of the prince's household. In 1626, at the request of Gaston, seconded by the advice of Richelieu, he was created marshal of France. This promotion was the precursor of his fall. It was a part of the policy of Richelieu to grant, in the first instance, more to suitors of rank than they were entitled to expect, that, in case of their afterwards opposing him, he might treat them without mercy. It appears he soon began to suspect that the new-made marshal was not likely to be a submissive dependant, and this was enough to induce him to work his ruin. Ornano himself aided his dangerous enemy, by pertinaciously requiring admittance into the council, and by using offensive language on his demand being refused. Various acts of the marshal were now represented in the darkest colours to the suspicious king, by Richelieu; and Louis, always open to suggestions of this kind, imprisoned the supposed offender in the castle of Vincennes. Ornano died there, in September, 1626. His death was attributed to poison, but the report was certainly unfounded. Whether, if he had lived, he would have saved his head, is doubtful; for when Richelieu had

once resolved to have a man's head, it was not easy to disappoint him.

Among the few whom justice, not tyranny or caprice, immured within the walls of the Bastile, may be reckoned Francis, Count de Bouteville, of the ancient and illustrious family of Montmorenci, whose father, Louis de Montmorenci, was vice-admiral of France in the reign of Henry the fourth. The example which was made of him was necessary to vindicate the insulted laws, and to check a murderous practice which had shed some of the best blood in the kingdom. For a long series of years, in defiance of the severe edicts issued against it by Henry IV. and Louis XIII., duelling had been carried to an extent which it is frightful to contemplate. War itself would scarcely have swept off more victims of the privileged class, than were sacrificed in private and frivolous quarrels. Paris, in particular, swarmed with professed duellists, who gloried in their exploits, and counted up their slain with the same exultation that a sportsman counts the game he has killed. Some, who prided themselves on a peculiar delicacy of honour, were ever on the watch to find a pretext for taking offence. Even to look at them, to touch any part of their dress in passing by them, or to utter a word which could be misconstrued, sufficed to draw from them a challenge to mortal combat.

Bouteville was one of the most conspicuous of these offenders. In 1624, M. Pontgibaud; in 1626, the Count de Thorigny and the Marquis Desportes; and in January, 1627, M. Lafrette, fell beneath his weapon. In consequence of the last of these encounters, he, and his second, the Count des Chappelles, were compelled to take refuge at Brussels. Thither he was followed by the Marquis de Beuvron, a relation of the Count de Thorigny, who was

eager to avenge his death. The Archduchess Isabella, who then governed the Netherlands, brought about a semblance of reconciliation between them, but their rancour remained unabated; for even at the moment when, in sign of forgiveness, they embraced each other, Beuvrou whispered to Bouteville, "I shall never be satisfied till I have met you sword in hand."

The archduchess also solicited Louis the thirteenth to grant the pardon of Bouteville, but the monarch refused. On hearing this, the rash and insolent culprit exclaimed, "Since a pardon is denied, I will fight in Paris, ay, and in the Place Royale too!" He was as good as his word. In May he returned to the French capital, and his first step was to offer Beuvron the satisfaction which that nobleman had expressed a wish to obtain. A combat of three against three was arranged, and the Place Royale was chosen as the spot for deciding it. Beuvron was seconded by Buquet, his equerry, and by Bussy d'Amboise, the latter of whom had been ill of fever for several days, and was weakened by repeated bleedings. Bouteville brought with him des Chappelles, his cousin, and constant auxiliary on such occasions, and another gentleman. They fought with sword and dagger.

Bussy being killed by des Chappelles, the five remaining combatants, who began to dread the vengeance of the violated laws, sought for safety in flight. Beuvron and Buquet succeeded in escaping to England. Bouteville and his cousin fled towards Lorraine. Unfortunately for them, Louis the thirteenth was then at the Louvre, and, as soon as he heard of the duel, he ordered a vigorous pursuit of the offenders. At Vitry, in Champagne, the officers of justice overtook Bouteville and his associate: the latter wished to resist, but the former prevailed on

him to surrender. On their arrival at Paris, they were committed to the Bastile, and no time was lost in bringing them to trial.

From all quarters the king was importuned by entreaties to pardon the criminals. The Countess de Bouteville threw herself at his feet, to beg the life of her husband; but he passed on without replying. "I pity her," said he to his courtiers, "but I must and will maintain my authority." The nobility were not more successful in their supplications to the king and the parliament. At the trial all that forsenic talent could do for the prisoners was done by Chastelet, their counsel. The plea which he put in for them was written with so much eloquence and boldness, that Cardinal Richelieu sternly told him it seemed to impeach the justice of the king. "Excuse me, sir," replied Chastelet, "it is only meant to justify his mercy, in case he should extend it to one of the bravest men in his kingdom." When the sentence of death was passed, another effort was made to move the king. The Princess of Condé, accompanied by three duchesses, and the wife of Bouteville, requested an audience of his Majesty. He at first refused to see them; but he subsequently admitted them to a private interview in the queen's apartments. They pleaded in vain. "I regret their fate as much as you do," said he; "but my conscience forbids me to pardon them."

Bouteville seems, from the beginning, to have made up his mind to die, and to have been unfeignedly repentant. While he was in the Bastile, he was attended by Cospean, the Bishop of Nantes, one of the most highly gifted preachers of the age. It was by the exhortations of this pious prelate that Bouteville was awakened to a due sense of his crimes. So moved was he by the fervid eloquence of

his spiritual guide that, while his trial was yet pending, he said to him, and doubtless with perfect sincerity, "So resigned am I to the will of God, and so ready to do every thing to save my soul, if to save it be possible, that, even more pressingly than my wife now begs for my pardon, I will beg my judges to condemn me to the gibbet, and to be drawn to it on a hurdle, in order to render my death more ignominious and meritorious." It was not without difficulty that Cospean could dissuade him from seeking salvation by means of this extraordinary self-abasement. Contrition alone, and not an act which would cast a stigma on his family, the prelate justly observed, was required to appease the wrath of an offended Deity.

Bouteville and his cousin met death with much firmness; the former refused to allow his eyes to be bandaged. On the scaffold a circumstance occurred, which appears to prove that vanity, like hope, sometimes does not leave us till we die. The moustachios of Bouteville were large and handsome, and he put up his hands, as though to save them, when the executioner came to cut off his hair. "What! my son," exclaimed Cospean, who attended him to the last, "are you still thinking on *this* world!"

The plan which, under seemingly favourable auspices, was formed, by Mary of Medicis and her partisans, to subvert the power of Richelieu, and which was shattered to pieces on the day emphatically called the Day of the Dupes (November 11, 1630), was disastrous to many who were concerned in or suspected of favouring it. Of the Marillacs, one, a proved soldier, was brought to the scaffold; the other, a magistrate of unimpeachable conduct, was hurried from one prison to another, was closely confined, and he died a captive. But we must restrict ourselves to

those individuals who were committed to the Bastile. One of these was Vautier, born at Montpelier, in 1592, who was the queen-mother's principal physician. If we were to give credit to Guy Patin, we must believe that Vautier was a worse pest than a whole host of duellists, and richly deserved to be the inmate of a dungeon. "He was," says Patin, "a rascally Jew of the Avignonese territory, very proud and very ignorant, who was lucky in having escaped the gallows for coining, and who afterwards found means to wriggle himself in at court." But the evidence of Patin is liable to more than suspicion in this instance; for Vautier was a friend to antimony and chemical remedies, all of which his censurer held in abhorrence: to prescribe them was worse in his eyes than being guilty of all the deadly sins. Vautier, however, certainly appears to have been of an obstinate disposition, and at times unjust.

Vautier was believed to have so much influence with the queen-mother, that he was one of the first to be arrested after the Day of the Dupes. He was confined for a while at Senlis, whence he was removed to the Bastile. In the Parisian fortress he remained for twelve years, during which period no communication with him was permitted. It was in vain that, after her flight, when she was so dangerously ill at Ghent, Mary of Medicis intreated to have the services of her confidential physician. Richelieu kept fast hold of his prey. In 1643, the captive was set at liberty by Mazarin, who subsequently appointed him head physician to the king. Patin flings his venom upon this appointment. It was, he says, bought of the minister for twenty thousand crowns, and the purchaser was to act as his spy. He adds an insinuation which does no credit to his heart. "See what

policy is!" he exclaims; "this man was twelve years imprisoned by the father, yet the health of the son is entrusted to him." M. Patin seems to have thought, that a man who has been injured by the parent must needs wish to poison the child. Vautier died in 1652.

The grave physician is succeeded by a very different personage; a courtier of high birth, handsome, accomplished, full of gallantry in both senses of the word, witty, and with his natural talents improved by early study. Francis de Bassompierre, who was all this, was born in Lorraine, in 1579, and was descended from the princely house of Cleves. On returning from his travels, he visited the court of Henry IV., and soon acquired the friendship of that sovereign. Among a crowd of courtiers, each vying with the other in splendour and extravagance, he was one of the foremost. At the baptism of the king's children, he wore a dress of cloth of gold, covered with pearls, the cost of which was nine hundred pounds. Gaming, thanks to the bad example set by Henry, was scandalously prevalent; and here, too, Bassompierre was prominent. He tells us, in his memoirs, that not a day passed, while he was at Fontainebleau, in which twenty thousand pistoles were not won and lost, and that he was a winner of half a million of livres within twelve months.

Desirous of adding the reputation of a soldier to his other pretensions, he served a campaign in Savoy, in 1602, and in Hungary the following year. Having established his military character, he resumed his station at the French court. The greatest part of the business of his life seems now, and for many years, to have been amorous intrigues—to apply the word love to them would be a profanation of it. However eager he might be to swell the number of his conquests, there is the best

reason for believing that those whom he attacked were willing enough to be overcome. It at once proves his attractions, and speaks volumes as to the low state of morals among the females at that period, that when, at a later date, Bassompierre was about to be imprisoned, he burnt more than six thousand letters, which contained the proofs of his amatory success. One of the most notorious of his amours was that in which he involved himself with Mdlle. Entragues, sister of the king's mistress, the Marchioness of Verneuil. By this lady he had a son. She is said to have obtained from him a promise of marriage, and for several years she sought to enforce the performance of it, and persisted in bearing his name. Meeting him one day at the Louvre, she told him publicly that he ought to cause the customary honours to be paid to her there, as his wife. "Why," said he, "will you take a *nom de guerre?*" "You are the greatest fool in all the court!" exclaimed the enraged lady. "What would you have said to me, then, if I had married you?" retorted the provoking Bassompierre.

In 1605, the career of the gay deceiver was near being cut short by a serious accident. At a tournament, in front of the Louvre, where the king was present, Bassompierre was so severely wounded by the lance of the Duke of Guise, his antagonist, that his life was long in danger. This tournament was the last which was exhibited in France; the dangerous amusement was discontinued, in consequence of this misadventure. People began to be of the same opinion as the Turkish sultan, that it was too much for a jest and too little for earnest.

Bassompierre at last appears to have felt that it was time for him "to live cleanly as a nobleman should do," and he resolved to marry. His choice fell on Charlotte

de Montmorenci, one of the richest and most beautiful women in France, and neither she nor her father, the constable, were averse to the union. It has been seen, in the sketch of Condé's career, that Henry IV. became excessively enamoured of her. In some cases her marriage would have made no difference; as Henry might have assented to it, and bound down the husband not to exercise his conjugal rights, as he had done with respect to Gabrielle d'Estrées and Jacqueline du Beuil. To such a restriction he probably thought that Bassompierre would not submit. Calling him therefore to his bed-side —for Henry was ill of the gout—he told him that he meant to unite him to Mdlle. d'Aumale, and revive for him the dukedom of Aumale. On Bassompierre asking with a smile whether his majesty meant him to have two wives, the king sighed deeply, and said, "Bassompierre, I will speak to you as a friend. I am become not only in love with Mdlle. de Montmorenci, but absolutely beside myself for her. If you marry her, and she loves you, I shall hate you; if she loves me, you will hate me. It is much better that this should not occur, to disturb the good understanding between us; for I have the most affectionate regard for you." The result was that the courtier resigned his mistress, and was rewarded for the sacrifice with the rank of colonel-general of the Swiss regiments. Bassompierre would fain make us believe that he was sorely grieved, at being thus deprived of the beautiful Montmorenci; but we may be sceptical on this head, since we have his confession, that, in order "not to be idle, and to console himself for his loss, he immediately made up his quarrel with three ladies, whom he had entirely quitted when he thought that he should be wedded."

For more than twenty years, Bassompierre continued to be a flourishing courtier. Once only, in that long period, he was in danger; it was from the hostility of la Vieville, the minister, who strove to cage him in the Bastile. The time of Bassompierre was, however, not yet come, and he had the satisfaction to witness the downfall of his enemy. In the course of these twenty years, he acquired reputation, both in the field and the cabinet; he was active at various sieges and battles, particularly at the sieges of Rochelle and Montauban, and he was entrusted with embassies to Spain, Switzerland, and England. which he executed in an able manner. For a short time he had the custody of the Bastile; and, in 1623, he rose to the rank of marshal. His being employed as a negotiator was the work of the royal favourite, Luynes, who was jealous of the influence which Bassompierre possessed with the monarch. Luynes was candid enough to confess this. "I love you, and esteem you," said he, "but the liking which the king has for you gives me umbrage. I am, in truth, situated like a husband who fears being deceived, and cannot see with pleasure an amiable man frequenting his wife." To remove from court the man whom he dreaded, Luynes offered the choice of a command, a government, or an embassy; Bassompierre chose the last.

Richelieu proved a far more formidable adversary than la Vieville. He doubted not that Bassompierre had been engaged in the late plot against him; he knew that he was a friend of the queen-mother; and he suspected him of having borne a part in the clandestine marriage of the Duke of Orleans with the Princess Margaret of Lorraine. It is said, also, that the cardinal imagined the marshal to have voted for imprisoning him, in case of the malecontents being successful. This was more than enough

to bring down on him the vengeance of the triumphant minister. Bassompierre was warned more than once of what would happen, and was advised to escape, but he refused to follow this advice. He was taken to the Bastile, in February, 1631. His arrest cost the death of the Princess of Conti, to whom he had long been secretly married; she died of grief in little more than two months.

Bassompierre had reason to hope that his imprisonment would be but of short duration. The evening before he was seized, he had mentioned to the king the reports which were afloat, and Louis had declared them to be false, and expressed much affection for him. The day after the deed was done, the monarch sent him a message, that he considered him to be a faithful servant, that he was not arrested for any fault, but in the fear of his being led to commit one, and that he should soon be released. Year after year elapsed, however, and the promised liberation was still delayed. Hopes were often held out to him, apparently with no other intention than that of making him feel the pain of disappointment. There seems, indeed, to have been a malignant resolution formed to torment him. The grain on his Lorraine estate was seized, the estate itself was ravaged, his nephew's mansion was destroyed, his pay was stopped, cabals were excited against him in the Bastile, and he was compelled to relinquish his commission of colonel-general for an inadequate compensation. Yet, while Richelieu was acting thus, he could ask Bassompierre to lend him his country-house! To add to the prisoner's vexations, his property was going to ruin, some of his friends proved faithless, and death was busy among his dearest relatives.

It was twelve years before the decease of Richelieu gave freedom to Bassompierre. His post of colonel-general

was restored to him by Mazarin; and an intention was manifested of appointing him governor to the minor king, but this intention was frustrated by a fit of apoplexy, which put an end to his existence in October, 1646.

Of the many individuals who were persecuted by the cardinal-king, none were more estimable than Francis de Rochechouart, who was usually denominated the Chevalier de Jars. He was of an ancient and noble family, which traced back its origin to the viscounts of Limoges, early in the eleventh century. To great personal and mental graces, and prepossessing manners, he added a mind of such firmness as is not of common occurrence, especially among the courtier tribe. His eminent qualities gained him the friendship of Anne of Austria, which alone was sufficient to excite the suspicion and hatred of Richelieu —that ultra Turk, who could bear "no rival near his throne," nor even the friend of any one who could possibly become a rival. In 1626, de Jars was therefore ordered to quit the court. He retired to England, where he soon won the favour of Charles I., his queen Henrietta Maria, the duke of Buckingham, and other distinguished characters. Bassompierre, an acute observer, was at that time in England as ambassador from Louis XIII., and from the manner in which he mentions him, it is evident that de Jars was in high repute at the court of Charles.

In 1631, de Jars was allowed to return, or was recalled to his native country. Whether he was lured over to France, that he might be within the grasp of his potent enemy, cannot now be ascertained. It is probable that he was, for he did not long remain at liberty. In February, 1632, he was involved in the downfall of Chateauneuf, the keeper of the seals, who had inexpiably offended the implacable minister. De Jars had sufficient demerit to

bring down this misfortune on him; he was the friend, and, as Bassompierre affirms, the confidant of Chateauneuf, possessed the queen's esteem, and was perhaps suspected of being looked upon with a favourable eye by the beautiful and fickle Duchess of Chevreuse, of whom Richelieu was enamoured. As, however, the first two of these offences would have hardly justified his imprisonment and trial, and as the third had the same defect in a greater degree; and, besides, could not have been decorously urged against him by a high dignitary of the church, the crime attributed to him was that of assisting Anne of Austria to correspond with Spain, and of planning the removal to England of the queen-mother and the Duke of Orleans.

It was the depth of winter when de Jars was thrown into one of the dungeons of the Bastile, and there he was kept for eleven months, till the clothes rotted off his back. The reader will remember what horrible abodes these dungeons were. It being supposed, perhaps, that his spirit was by this time enough broken, he was sent for trial to Tours, where a tribunal of obedient judges had been formed, for the express purpose of sitting in judgment upon him. At the head of this tribunal was one Laffemas, or La Fymas; a man who was redeemed from the contempt of mankind for his baseness, only by the hatred which was excited by his power and will to do mischief. He was the ready tool; or, to use a more emphatic and appropriate French phrase, the *âme damnée* of Richelieu, and was capable of diving to the lowest deep of degradation, in the service of his master. He bore the well-earned and significant nickname of "the cardinal's hangman."

At the Bastile and at Troyes, de Jars underwent no fewer than eighty examinations. In these, Laffemas

strained every nerve to seduce, or beguile, or terrify, the prisoner into avowals which would manifest or imply guilt in himself or in his friends. But de Jars was proof alike against feigned sympathy, intreaties, artful snares, and ferocious threats. Not a word dropped from his lips by which any one could be criminated. Laffemas had no sinecure office in conducting this iniquitous affair; he was often lashed by de Jars with unsparing severity, as a mendacious and deceitful coward; nor did the cardinal himself escape without a full portion of stinging censure.

De Jars did not stop here. He determined to inflict a public disgrace upon Laffemas. By dint of importunity, he obtained permission to hear mass, on All Saints' day, in the church of the Jacobins, where he knew that Laffemas would be present. Thither he was taken, under a strong guard. Watching the moment when, with downcast eyes and a Tartuffe countenance, Laffemas was coming from the communion table, he broke from his guards, and seized the judge by the throat. "Villain!" exclaimed he, "this is the moment to confess the truth. Now, while your God is on your lips, acknowledge my innocence, and your injustice in persecuting me. As you pretend to be a Christian, act like one: if you do not, I renounce you as my judge, and I call upon every one who hears me to bear witness that I protest against your being so."

This singular scene drew the wondering congregation round the parties. But the people were by no means inclined to interfere in behalf of the intendant, and some time elapsed before the soldiers could extricate him from the gripe of the prisoner. Laffemas seems not to have been deficient in courage. Undisconcerted by this sudden

attack, he said, in a conciliating tone, "Do not make yourself uneasy, sir; I assure you that the cardinal loves you; you will get off with merely going to travel in Italy; but you must first allow us to show you some billets, in your own hand-writing, which will convince you that you are more blameable than you say you are." "Such an insinuation," remarks Anquetil, "was not calculated to set him at ease. Richelieu, as Madame de Motteville tells us, said, that 'with two lines of a man's writing, however innocent that man might be, he might be brought to trial; because, by proper management, whatever was wanted could be found in them.' Accordingly, when de Jars heard talk of writing, he gave himself up for lost, but he soon armed himself with renovated courage."

The insinuation that written evidence existed was a falsehood. Fresh arts were therefore employed, to obtain a confession. They were as fruitless as all the former had been. Sentence of death was then passed; and, this having been done, final efforts more were made to move him, first by a promise of pardon, next by the menace of torture. He treated both with contempt. He was at last led to the scaffold; he ascended it with calm courage; and, after once more asserting his innocence, he laid his head upon the block. While he was waiting for the blow, and all earthly hopes must have been dead in his bosom, he was suddenly raised up, and told that his life was spared. As he was about to descend from the scaffold, the infamous Laffemas approached, and besought him, in return for the king's mercy, to disclose whatever he knew respecting the misdeeds of Chateauneuf. But de Jars disdainfully replied, "It is in vain that you seek to take advantage of my disturbed state of mind: since the fear of death failed to extort from me anything that could

injure my friend, you may be certain that all your labour will be thrown away.*"

It is said that the whole of this scene—a disgraceful scene to all the actors but one—was got up by Laffemas under the direction of Richelieu. Packed as the judges were, it was supposed that, if they thought death were to ensue, even they would shrink from pronouncing the guilt of a man against whom there was not a shadow of proof. The pardon was, therefore, shown to them, and they were told that the mockery of an execution was only meant to intimidate the prisoner into the desired confession. But of what stuff must judges have been made in those days, when they could thus consent to violate the dignity of justice, and the feelings of humanity, in order to gratify the malice of a minister!

From Troyes, de Jars was sent back to the Bastile. He remained there till the spring of 1638, when he was liberated on condition of his immediate departure, to travel in Italy. From Guy Patin's letters, we learn that the chevalier was indebted for his release to the intercession of Charles I. of England and Henrietta Maria.

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* Biographers and historians differ with respect to the circumstances which ensued on the pardon being announced. While some give the statement which I have adopted, others affirm that, when de Jars was taken back to prison, he remained for a long while speechless, and seemingly deprived of all consciousness. This is asserted by Madame de Motteville; and, as she was his intimate friend, her authority has considerable weight. But her assertion may be correct, and yet it is more than probable that de Jars may have made the reply which is attributed to him. I think the conduct ascribed to him in the text more consonant than any other with his intrepid character. Nature, however, can endure only to a certain point, and the effort that is made to bear up, and which, as long as danger is present, seldom fails with the honourable and brave, necessarily produces exhaustion when the struggle is over. It may therefore easily be believed, that, though de Jars was capable of answering Laffemas with his wonted spirit—and the very sight of such a monster would stimulate that spirit—he might sink into insensibility on his return to prison.

He did not return to France till after the decease of his prosecutor.

De Jars was engaged in the early part of the political contest which led to the ridiculous war of the Fronde; but he seems to have been rather a peace-maker than a firebrand, for he endeavoured to arrange matters by bringing about a reconciliation between Mazarin, with whom he had become acquainted at Rome, and Chateauneuf, the keeper of the seals, of whom he was a constant friend. He at length withdrew from the court, passed his latter years in happy retirement, and died in 1670.

Nearly at the same time that de Jars was set free, the gates of the Bastile were opened to admit three citizens of Paris, who had been guilty of a crime which could not be overlooked: they had dared to remonstrate, perhaps somewhat too roughly, against being robbed of the means of subsistence. "They went," says Guy Patin, "to M. Corneuil, and in some degree threatened him, on a report being spread, that the payment of the annuities receivable at the Town Hall was about to be suspended, and the money to be applied *in usus bellicos*. The names of these three annuitants are Bourges, Chenu, and Celoron, and they are all three *boni viri optimèque mihi noti*. God grant, I pray, that no misfortune may happen to them." Whether the kind prayer of Patin was heard, we are not told.

That such things should occur in a country governed as France was, is quite natural. Richelieu brooked not even the shadow of opposition; and Louis, submissive slave though he was to an imperious minister, had all the brutal pride of an Oriental despot. In two instances (out of many which might be quoted), the one not long before, and the other shortly after, this period, the monarch, to whom parasites prostituted the title of "the

Just," did not scruple to treat with contumelious insolence the parliament of Paris, a body of magistrates eminent for their learning and other qualities. On the first occasion, having taken offence at a request which they made he told them that, "in future, whenever he came to them, he should expect to be received outside the door of their hall, by four presidents on their knees, as the custom had formerly been." The second time, when, with respect to the Duke De Valette's trial, the president Bellièvre, in decorous but dignified language, remonstrated with Louis on his gross violation of justice and proper feeling, in wishing the judges to sit in his own palace, while he was present to overawe them, he furiously replied, that he detested all those who opposed his trying a duke and peer wherever he pleased. They were, he told them, ignorant beings, unfit for their office, and he did not know whether he should not put others in their place. "I will be obeyed," said he; "and I will soon make you see plainly that all privileges are founded only on a bad custom, and that I will not hear them talked about any more." But from this—which, however, can scarcely be called a digression—let us return to his captives in the Bastile.

During a part of the time that De Jars was in the Bastile, there was within its walls a prisoner equally as brave, and of as honourable a character, as himself. This was Adrien de Montluc, Count de Cramail, born in 1568, a grandson of that intrepid but cruel Montluc whose commentaries were called by Henry IV. the Soldier's Bible. In the second of Regnier's satires, which is addressed to Cramail, the poet winds up an animated panegyric on him, by declaring that he proves "virtue not to be dead in all courtiers." There was more truth in this than is always to be found in the eulogies lavished by a poet. It

appears, from various authorities, that he shone in conversation, was well-informed, and was an honourable, benevolent, and judicious man. As a military officer, he earned reputation in various battles. His conduct at the combat of Veillane, in 1630, where Montmorenci utterly defeated a force five times as numerous as his own, called forth a complimentary letter from cardinal Richelieu. "Fewer lines than you have received blows," says his eminence, "will suffice to testify my joy that the enemy has cut out more work for your tailor than your surgeon. I pray to God that, after such rencounters, you may always have more to spend for clothes than plaisters; and that, for the advantage of the king's service, and the glory of those who have acquired so much on this occasion, others of the same kind may often occur; among which there will, I hope, be some that will enable me to convince you that I am, &c., &c."

The manner in which Richelieu proved his friendship for Cramail was by sending him to the Bastile. It has been stated that Cramail was put into confinement shortly after the Day of the Dupes, and his attachment to the Prince of Condé was the cause of it. This, however, appears to be a mistake. Cramail was undoubtedly serving under Louis XIII. in Lorrain, as late as 1635, at the period when the French arms were under a temporary eclipse; and we learn from Laporte, and other writers, that, believing the king's person to be in jeopardy, the count advised him to return to Paris. For this advice, reasonable as it was, he was incarcerated by Richelieu. His imprisonment did not terminate till after the death of the cardinal. He did not long survive his persecutor; his health was broken by captivity and harsh treatment, and he died in 1646. Cramail was the author of three

works—"La Comédie des Proverbes;" "Les Jeux de l'Inconnu;" and "Les Pensées du Solitaire."

Among the contemporaries of Bassompierre, de Jars, and Cramail, within the walls of the Bastile, there was another of equal rank, but not of an equally noble mind. His hands were stained with blood; his earliest promotion was bought by perpetrating a cowardly murder. This personage was Nicholas de l'Hospital, Marquis of Vitry, to whom I have slightly alluded in my notice of the Marchioness d'Ancre. He was the degenerate son of a warrior, who was incapable of a dishonourable action. Vitry, who was born in 1611, succeeded his father as captain of the royal guards, and ingratiated himself with Luynes, the minion of Louis XIII. In concert with Luynes, he formed the plan of assassinating Marshal d'Ancre, who was obnoxious to the king. Eager to win the marshal's staff which was held by Concini, Vitry let slip no opportunity of irritating the king against the intended victim, and of pressing for permission to assassinate him. The monarch hesitated for a while, not from virtue but from fear; he ended by granting his sanction, and Vitry lost not a moment in acting upon it. With his brother du Hallier, and an associate named Perray, he waited for Concini at the entrance of the Louvre, and there the three confederates despatched him with pistols, which they had kept concealed beneath their cloaks. When Louis was informed that the deed was done, he had the ineffable baseness to look out at the palace window, and exclaim, "Many thanks to you, Vitry! I am now really king!" It must, however, be owned that the baseness of the monarch was kept in countenance by that of his courtiers and flatterers, who lauded the assassin as profusely as though he had been the saviour of the state.

For this disgraceful service, Vitry was rewarded with the great object of his ambition, the rank of marshal. On hearing of this, the Duke of Bouillon indignantly declared that he blushed at being a French marshal, now that the marshal's staff was made the recompence of one who traded in murder.

Though of the two favourites of the queen-mother, Vitry had slain the husband with his own hand, and thus been the cause of the wife's public execution, and though at that time he had treated her with disgusting insolence; yet when, two years afterwards, a feigned reconcilement took place between Mary of Medicis and her son, she allowed Vitry to be presented to her. On this occasion a scene of dissimulation occurred, which has not often been paralleled. Vitry bent to kiss the hem of her garment, but she graciously stretched out her hand to raise him, saying, at the same time, "I have always praised your affectionate zeal in the king's service." To which, with equal sincerity, he replied, "it was that consideration alone which induced me to do all that the king desired; without, however, my having had the slightest idea of offending your majesty." If we cannot praise the parts which these actors played, we must at least admit that they played them skilfully.

The military career of Vitry did not begin till the breaking out of the war between the Protestants and Catholics, in 1621. Though he was deficient in principle, he was not so in courage; in the course of the war he distinguished himself upon many occasions, particularly in the isle of Rhé and at the blockade of Rochelle. He obtained the government of Provence in 1631, and he held it for six years. At the expiration of that period, he was arrested, and sent to the Bastile. His having

caned an archbishop, and misused his authority in various cases, were among the causes of his imprisonment. Richelieu said of him that, "though his courage and fidelity rendered him worthy to govern Provence, yet it was necessary to deprive him of office, because, being of a haughty and insolent disposition, he was not fit to rule a people so jealous as the Provençals were of their franchises and privileges."

Vitry spent six years in the Bastile, from which prison he was not released till after the death of Cardinal Richelieu. During the latter part of his imprisonment he participated in intrigues, which would have brought him to the block had they been discovered. In conjunction with Bassompierre, Cramail, and others, he entered into the plot of which the gallant Count de Soissons was the head. The state prisoners in the Bastile were, at that period, allowed so much freedom of intercourse, both with their friends and among themselves, that they had plenty of opportunity to conspire. It was arranged, between Vitry, Bassompierre, and their associates, that, as soon as Soissons had gained a victory, they should seize the Bastile and the Arsenal, and call the citizens of Paris to arms. De Retz is of opinion that the success of their scheme would have been certain; but the death of Soissons, who fell in the battle of Marfée at the moment of his victory, prevented the conspirators from carrying their design into effect. Fortunately for those who were concerned, their secret practices were never disclosed while Cardinal Richelieu was alive.

Vitry was created a duke in 1644, but he died in a few months after he obtained this title. He left a son, possessed of talent far superior to his own, and who in character more resembled his grandfather than his father.

The Count de la Châtre, in his Memoirs, relates a circumstance respecting the liberation of Vitry and his fellow-prisoners. The anecdote shows among other things, to what an extent Louis XIII. was infected with what Byron calls the "good old gentlemanly vice" of avarice. "The Cardinal (Mazarin) and M. de Chavigny," says la Châtre, "solicited the king for the deliverance of the marshals Vitry and Bassompierre, and the Count de Cramail. The means which they employed on this occasion deserve to be recorded, as being rather pleasant; for, finding that the king was not very willing to comply, they attacked him on his weak side, and represented to him that these three prisoners cost him an enormous sum to keep them in the Bastile, and that, as they were no longer able to raise cabals in the kingdom, they might as well be at home, where they would cost him nothing. This indirect mode succeeded, this prince being possessed by such extraordinary avarice, that whoever asked him for money was an insufferable burthen to him: so far did he carry this, that, after the return of Treville, Beaupuy, and others, whom the violence of the late Cardinal (Richelieu) had, when he was dying forced him to abandon, he sought occasion to give a rebuff to each of them, that he might prevent them from hoping to be rewarded for what they had suffered for him." Here we see a king beginning his reign by prompting his servants to commit murder, and ending it by displaying cold-blooded ingratitude to those who had been faithful to him—fit end for such a beginning!

From a noble who stained his hands with blood to win the favour of a king, we gladly turn to a plebeian who risked his life, rather than violate his fidelity to the neglected and ill-used consort of that monarch. Peter de la Porte was this plebeian, who, though his trials were

not carried to such a dreadful extent as those of the chevalier de Jars, has a legitimate claim, as far as regards probity and firmness of mind, to be placed in the same class with that distinguished character. La Porte was born in 1603, and entered into the service of Anne of Austria at the age of eighteen, as one of her cloak-bearers. It being suspected that he was trusted by the queen, he was deprived of his office in 1626, when a desperate attempt was made by the minister to implicate her in the conspiracy of La Chalais. He then entered into her body guards. In 1631, he was, however, allowed to resume his former situation.

Ever studying to abase the queen, Richelieu believed that he had at last found an opportunity to accomplish his purpose effectually. This was in 1637*. That the queen should privately keep up some correspondence with the King of Spain and the cardinal infant, who were her brothers, and also with the persons whom she valued in the courts of Madrid and Brussels, was natural, more especially in her discomfortable situation, slighted as she was by her husband, and thwarted and misrepresented by the minister and the minister's satellites. But Anne of Austria had a sincere attachment to France, and there is no reason to believe that her letters contained anything which could prejudice her adopted country. Yet, it was not advisable that they should come into the hands of a

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* It has been conjectured, by some writers, that Richelieu was stimulated to this new attack upon the queen by the circumstance of her being pregnant, which induced him to dread that her influence would be greatly increased, if he did not find the means of rendering her an object of suspicion. But the conjecture is erroneous, as a comparison of dates will prove. The attack upon her was commenced in the summer of 1637 (La Porte was sent to the Bastile in August), and the queen was not brought to bed till September, 1638, thirteen months afterwards.

man, who boasted that with only two lines of an innocent person's writing he could ruin him—a boast which could be made by no one that was not dead to honour and shame. It was necessary, therefore, to provide a safe place, where the correspondence might be deposited. The queen's favourite convent of Val de Grace, of which she was the foundress, was the place which she chose. There Anne had an elegant apartment, or oratory, in which, after her devotions were over, she could sometimes, free from the constraint and heartlessness of the court, enjoy a few hours of social intercourse with the inmates of the convent. One of the nuns received the letters from Spain and the Netherlands, and placed them in a closet, whence they were taken by the queen, whose answers were forwarded in the same manner.

Richelieu, who had spies in all quarters, discovered the secret of the correspondence which was carried on through the Val de Grace. He lost not a moment in filling the mind of the weak Louis with phantoms of danger, which was to arise from the queen's unauthorised communications with her relatives. The queen was hurried off by her husband to Chantilly, where she was confined to her own room, scantily attended, and was obliged to submit to being interrogated by the chancellor. Such was the baseness of the courtiers that, believing her to be lost, not one of them would venture even to look up at her window. Her confidential servants were shut up in various prisons. The chancellor himself visited Val de Grace to make a rigorous search for papers; but he found nothing. That he failed in his search is not marvellous; for he is believed to have previously contrived to give the queen notice of the intended visit. All the papers had consequently been removed,

and placed under the care of the Marchioness of Sourdis.

Foiled in this attempt to reach the secret, Richelieu tried whether it might not be wrung from the servants of the queen. La Porte, as being supposed to possess a large share of her confidence, was of course most open to suspicion and persecution. There had, besides, been found upon him a letter from the queen to the Duchess of Chevreuse, who was then in exile. In the month of August, 1637, he was committed to the Bastile. Here he was repeatedly and severely questioned, but nothing to criminate his royal mistress could be drawn from him. It was in vain that the cardinal himself employed threats and promises, to obtain the information which he so much desired. The obstinate fidelity of La Porte was not to be shaken, even when the commissary showed him a paper, which he said contained an order for applying to him the torture, and took him to the room that he might see the instruments. He was equally proof to the fear of death.

In May, 1638, it being then certain that, after being childless for two-and-twenty years, Anne of Austria was in a situation to give an heir to the throne, the liberation of La Porte was granted to her. He was, however, exiled to Saumur, where he resided till the decease of Louis XIII. When Anne became regent, she recalled him, and gave him a hundred thousand francs, that he might purchase the place of principal valet-de-chambre to the king. This office he held for several years. But La Porte was too honest to prosper in a corrupt court. Sincerely attached to the queen-regent, he thought it his duty to apprise her of the degrading reports which were spread on the subject of her long interviews with Mazarin, and

by this candour he cooled her friendship and gratitude, while, at the same time, he incurred the enmity of the cardinal himself, by communicating to her a circumstance, relative to the young king, which Mazarin was desirous of keeping concealed. In revenge, Mazarin deprived him of his place, and forbad him to appear at court. It was not till after the death of the cardinal that La Porte was again admitted to the king's presence, and from him he met with a kind reception. He died in 1680.

Alchemy, the rock on which the peace and fortune of numbers have been wrecked, was still more fatal to Noel Pigard Dubois, a restless and certainly unprincipled adventurer, whom it deprived of liberty and life. He was a native of Coulomiers, adopted his father's profession, that of a surgeon, then abandoned it, and voyaged to the Levant, where he spent four years. During his stay in the East, he studied the occult sciences. Returning to Paris, he passed there four years of an obscure and often intemperate existence, associating chiefly with pretenders to alchemical knowledge. Caprice, or a sudden fit of devotion, next induced him to enter a Capuchin convent, but he appears to have speedily become tired of restraint, and accordingly he scaled the walls and escaped. At the expiration of three years he re-embraced a monastic life, took the vows, and was ordained a priest, in which character he was known by the name of Father Simon. The quicksilver of his disposition seemed at length to be fixed, for he continued to wear the monkish habit during ten years; but he verified the proverb that the cowl does not make the monk, his unquiet spirit was again roused into action, and he fled into Germany. There he became a convert to the doctrines of Luther, and once more devoted himself to seeking for the philosopher's stone.

Hoping, perhaps, that there would be more believers, or fewer rivals, in his own country than in Germany, he retraced his steps to Paris. Probably he was himself half dupe, half knave, almost believing that he had really found the great secret, but resolved at all events to turn his supposed skill to his own advantage. His first step was to abjure protestantism; his next was to marry under a fictitious name. Rumours of his wonderful hermetic discoveries were speedily bruited about. They procured him the acquaintance of an Abbé Blondeau, an evidently credulous man, who introduced him to Father Joseph, the favourite and confidant of Richelieu, as a person who might be useful to the state. For the services which Dubois was to render, it was stipulated that his past misdeeds should be buried in oblivion. France was at that time groaning under a heavy load of taxation, money was raised by the most abominable exactions; and, consequently, it was but just that an individual who promised to procure supplies more innocently than by grinding the face of the people, should be forgiven for offences which, though deserving of punishment, were somewhat less iniquitous than systematic tyranny and extortion.

It affords a striking proof to what an extent the delusions of alchemy prevailed in that age, that the strong-minded Richelieu instantly grasped at the bubble which floated before him. Had only the weak Louis done so, there would have been no cause for wonder. But the minister was full as eager as his nominal sovereign. It was arranged that Dubois should perform the "great work" in the presence of the king, the queen, and a throng of illustrious personages. The Louvre was the place at which the new and never-failing gold mine was to be opened.

When the important day arrived, Dubois adroitly acted in a manner which was calculated to inspire confidence. He requested that some one might be charged to keep an eye on his proceedings. One of his body guards, named Saint Amour, was chosen by the king for this purpose. Musket balls, given by a soldier, together with a grain of the powder of projection, were placed in a crucible, the whole was covered with cinders, and the furnace fire was soon raised to proper pitch. The transmutation was now declared by Dubois to be accomplished, and he requested that Louis would himself blow off the ashes from the precious contents of the crucible. Eager to see the first specimen of the boundless riches which were about to flow in upon him, the king plied the bellows with such violence that the eyes of the queen and many of the courtiers were nearly blinded with the dust. At last a lump of gold emerged to view, and his transports were boundless. He hugged Dubois with childish rapture, ennobled him, and appointed him president of the treasury, nominated Blondeau a privy counsellor, promised a cardinal's hat to Father Joseph, and gave eight thousand livres to Saint Amour. The master of perennial treasures could afford to be generous.

The experiment is said to have been repeated, and with the same success as in the first instance. Dubois must at least have been a clever knave, an adept in legerdemain, to have deluded so many strongly interested spectators; and that, too, in spite of the precautions which he had himself daringly recommended for the prevention of fraud.

But there was a rock on which the luckless adventurer was doomed to split. Humbler patrons than he had found might for a long while have been satisfied with the scanty portion of gold contained in the bottom of a

crucible; but the desires of his powerful friends were of a more greedy and impatient kind, not to be fed with distant hopes, but demanding large and immediate fruition. Richelieu loudly called upon the alchemist to operate on an extensive scale; and he proved that it was necessary to do so, by requiring that Dubois should furnish weekly a sum which should not be less than six hundred thousand livres,—about 25,000*l.* The startled Dubois requested time to make the requisite preparations, and time was granted. In truth, as the powder of projection was believed to be procurable only by a protracted and laborious process, it was impossible not to admit his claim for delay. The marvel is, that he did not avail himself of the respite, to get beyond the reach of danger. When the day arrived which he had named, he was of course compelled to own that he was not yet prepared.

Suspicion being excited, he was imprisoned at Vincennes, whence he was transferred to the Bastile. Offended pride and vanity and disappointed cupidity are often cruel passions. To punish Dubois for his sins against them, the cardinal appointed a commission to try him; but being averse from coming forward in the character of a dupe, he ordered him to be arraigned on a charge of dealing in magic. As the wretched man obstinately persisted in denying his guilt, he was put to the torture. To gain a brief reprieve from his sufferings, he offered to realise the golden dreams which he had excited. Faith was not quite extinct in his patrons, and he was allowed to make another experiment. It is needless to say that he failed. Being thus driven from his last hold, he avowed his imposture, was sentenced to death, and terminated his existence on the scaffold, on the 23rd of June, 1637.

The battle of Thionville, which was fought in 1639, and terminated in the defeat of the French, and the death of Feuquieres, their general, gave two prisoners to the Bastile; not foreign enemies, or rebellious Frenchmen, but officers who had combated for their country—the Count de Grancé and the Marquis de Praslin. At Thionville, the troops under their orders refused to advance, and finally ran away. It appears, from the testimony of Bassompierre, that no blame was attributable to the count or the marquis; they were nevertheless immured in the Bastile, though it does not seem easy to discern how the cowardice of soldiers is to be cured by imprisoning their officers. It was, however, in a similar kind of spirit, only somewhat more barbarous, that in England, more than a century afterwards, Admiral Byng was sacrificed (murdered is the proper word); not, as Voltaire sarcastically observes, "to encourage the others," but to divert public indignation from its proper objects. The system was carried to a horrible length in France, during the reign of terror. Less sanguinary, in this instance, than his imitators, Richelieu contented himself with inflicting a short deprivation of liberty. The two captives were restored to favour, and Grancé rose in the next reign to the rank of marshal.

The next two cases which are on record, afford a striking proof of the contempt in which Richelieu held justice and the law of nations, whenever they chanced to stand in the way of his political schemes, and the gratification of his vindictive spirit. On the death of the gallant warrior, Bernard of Saxe Weimar, which took place in the summer of 1639, the possession of his admirably trained army became an object which all the belligerent powers were eager to obtain. Among those who sought

the prize was the Prince Palatine, a son of the unfortunate Frederic, who lost the crown of Bohemia and his own hereditary states. The prince was passing through France, from England, to enter on the negotiation, when he was arrested, and sent to the Bastile, under pretence of his being an unknown and suspected person. Richelieu, meanwhile, pushed on his treaty with the officers of the deceased duke, and succeeded in purchasing their services for France. When this was accomplished, it was discovered that the arrest of the Prince Palatine was a mistake, and he was consequently set free.

The second case occurred in the following year, 1640, and was a still more flagrant violation of international laws, and more fraught with circumstances of baseness and malignity. Louis XIII. had a sister, Christina, beautiful, accomplished, and of winning manners; in a word, as worthy of being beloved as he was the contrary. This princess was the widow of the Duke of Savoy, who left to her the regency of his states, during the minority of Emanuel Philibert, his son. On the decease of her husband, the ambition of his brothers prompted them to grasp at the reins of government, and, to effect their purpose, they called in the aid of Spain. The duchess was sorely pressed by her enemies. In this strait, nature and policy combined to make her apply to Louis for aid. The appeals to him, in her letters, are often affecting. Richelieu was willing enough to send succours, but he was determined that they should be bought at an extravagant rate. His object, in truth, was to place the dominions of the minor, and even the minor himself, at the mercy of France. He not only required that certain fortresses should be delivered up to him, but also that the young duke should be put into the hands of the French

king, that is to say, into his own. To bring this about, he descended to the most unworthy intrigues and double dealing; alternately calumniating the duchess to her brothers-in-law, and them to her, in order to render impossible an accommodation between them. Borne down by necessity, the duchess at length consented to admit French garrisons into some of her fortresses, but she resolutely persisted in refusing to surrender her son.

The firmness of the duchess was sustained by Count Philip d'Aglie, one of her principal ministers, a man of discernment and talent, who never slackened in his hostility to the scheme of Richelieu. He feared that the visit of the young duke to France would resemble the descent into Avernus—"*Sed revocare gradum, hoc opus, hic labor est.*" The cardinal had hoped that, in an interview which the duchess had with Louis at Grenoble, she might be cajoled or terrified into compliance. But on that occasion her own firmness was backed by the presence of Count d'Aglie, and the expectations of the ungodly churchman were in consequence frustrated. So irritated was he by his disappointment, that he proposed, in council, to arrest the count; but, powerful and feared as he was, he could not prevail upon the members to assent to this measure. It was therefore postponed to a better opportunity. In the meanwhile, calumny was set at work to blacken the character of the devoted individual, that when the happy time arrived for pouncing upon him, he might excite no sympathy. That the slander would wound the duchess also was a matter of little concern to the personage by whom it was propagated. It was roundly asserted, apparently without the shadow of a reason for it, that an illicit intercourse subsisted between the duchess and the minister, the latter of whom the cardinal, with an affec-

tation of virtuous anger, was pleased to designate as "the wretch who was ruining the reputation of Christina." It was not till the following year that he could succeed in wreaking his malice on the count. As soon as the French troops had recovered Turin from the Spaniards, Richelieu ordered d'Aglie to be seized; and, in spite of the remonstrances of the duchess against this gross violation of her sovereignty, he was hurried into France, and confined in the Bastile. The date of the count's deliverance I am unable to ascertain, but it is probable that his imprisonment was not protracted beyond the life of the cardinal.

It appears to have been about this time that there was published a bitter satire upon the cardinal, for which an unlucky author, who had no concern with it, was conveyed to the Bastile. The satire bore the title of "The Milliad," from its consisting of a thousand lines. One edition is intituled, "The Present Government; or, the Eulogy of the Cardinal." It was attributed to Charles de Beys, a now-forgotten author, who wrote three plays and some verses, and was lauded as a rival of Malherbe, by a few of his ill-judging contemporaries. It must have been some mischievous joker that ascribed "The Milliad" to him, for Beys was not the sort of man to meddle with political satire, especially on such a dangerous subject: he was of an indolent, convivial disposition, and spent the largest portion of his time in enjoying the pleasures of the table. He was, nevertheless, pent up in the Bastile, as the libeller of the all-potent cardinal. Fortunately for him, he was able to prove his innocence, was set at liberty, and continued to follow his former course of life, till his constitution gave way, and he died, in 1659, at the age of forty.

In the winter of 1642, Richelieu, who had so largely fed the prisons and scaffolds of France, terminated his career of ambition and blood. There is extant a letter which, while the cardinal was on his death bed, was written to him by one of his victims, named Dussault. The letter bears date on the first of December, three days previous to the decease of the minister, and it seems never to have reached him. What was the offence of Dussault is not known; from a broad hint which is given in his epistle, it appears that he suffered for having refused to execute some sanguinary order given to him by Richelieu. When he penned the following lines, he had been more than eleven years an inmate of the Bastile.

"My Lord,—There is a time when man ceases to be barbarous and unjust; it is when his approaching dissolution compels him to descend into the gloom of his conscience, and to deplore the cares, griefs, pains, and misfortunes, which he has caused to his fellow-creatures: allow me to say fellow-creatures, for you must now see that of which you would never before allow yourself to be convinced, or persuade yourself to know, that the sovereign and excellent celestial Workman has formed us all on the same model, and that he designed men to be distinguished from each other by their virtues alone. Now, then, my lord, you are aware that for eleven years you have subjected me to sufferings, and to enduring a thousand deaths in the Bastile, where the most disloyal and wicked subject of the king would be still worthy of pity and compassion. How much more then ought they to be shown to me, whom you have doomed to rot there, for having disobeyed your order, which, had I performed it, would have condemned my soul to eternal torment,

and made me pass into eternity with blood-stained hands. Ah! if you could but hear the sobs, the lamentations and groans, which you extort from me, you would quickly set me at liberty. In the name of the eternal God, who will judge you as well as me, I implore you, my lord, to take pity on my sufferings and bewailings; and, if you wish that He should show mercy to you, order my chains to be broken before your death hour comes, for when that comes, you will no longer be at leisure to do me that justice which I must require only from you, and you will persecute me even after you are no more, from which God keep us, if you will permit yourself to be moved by the most humble prayer of a man who has ever been a loyal subject to the king."

This application was made in vain. If the cardinal ever saw it, which is doubtful, it failed to penetrate his iron heart; he "died, and made no sign," in favour of the wretched supplicant. From Dussault's evident despair of ever being freed except by Richelieu, it may be conjectured that, as an agent of the minister, he had given inexplicable offence to some one on whom power was now likely to devolve; and this supposition is rendered more probable, by his captivity having been subsequently protracted to an extraordinary length. It was not till the 20th of June, 1692, that he was dismissed, after having languished in the Bastile for sixty-one years! At his advanced age,—for he must at least have been between eighty and ninety—he could scarcely have deemed the boon of liberty a blessing. In the common course of nature, all his kindred and friends must have been gone, and as his habits were wholly unfit for the turmoil of the world, and he was perhaps exposed to

want, it is not unnatural to conclude that he may have been a solitary and starving wanderer for the brief remainder of his existence. A situation more forlorn than this it would be difficult to imagine.

CHAPTER VII.

Reign of Louis XIV.—Regency of Anne of Austria—Inauspicious circumstances under which she assumed the Regency George de Casselny—The Count de Montresor—The Marquis de Fontrailles—Marshal de Rantzau—The Count de Rieux—Bernard Guyard—Broussel, governor of the Bastile—The Duchess of Montpensier orders the cannon of the Bastile to be fired on the king's army—Conclusion of the war of the Fronde—Surrender of the Bastile—Despotism of Louis XIV.—Slavishness of the nobles—John Herauld Gourville—The Count de Guiche—Nicholas Fouquet—Paul Pellisson Fontainier—Charles St. Evremond—Simon Morin—The Marquis de Vardes—Count Bussy Rabutin—Saci le Maistre—The Duke of Lauzun—Marquis of Cavoie—The Chevalier de Rohan—A nameless prisoner—Charles D'Assoucy—Miscellaneous prisoners.

The regency of Annie of Austria commenced under auspices which were not of the most favourable kind. For a long series of years she had been persecuted by a tyrant minister, and discredited and humiliated, in every possible manner, by an unfeeling husband. It would be a tedious task to enumerate all the slights and injuries to which she was exposed; a specimen may suffice. To avoid the disgrace of being sent back to Spain, she had been compelled to confess before the Council a fault which she everywhere else disavowed, and of which it is improbable that she was guilty; on her bringing Louis XIV. into the world, she had suffered a stinging insult from her consort, who had pertinaciously refused to give her the embrace which was customary on such occasions—an insult which affected her so deeply that her life was endangered; when he was on the brink of the grave, and she earnestly sought to remove his prejudices against her,

he coldly replied to Chavigni, who was pleading her cause, "In my situation I must forgive, but I am not obliged to believe her; and, in settling the regency, he would fain have excluded from it the object of his hatred, but, that being impracticable, he took care to shackle her authority in such a way as would have left her scarcely more than the mere title of regent. Her having been childless for twenty-two years, and been treated in childbed with such marked aversion by him, were also circumstances which were well calculated to throw dangerous doubts on the legitimacy of the infant sovereign. Yet Anne of Austria triumphed over all this, procured the setting aside of her deceased husband's arrangements, obtained unlimited power, and for five years governed France without opposition, and with a considerable enhancement of its military fame. It was not till the troubles of the Fronde broke out that she encountered unpopularity and resistance.

During the peaceable period of the queen-mother's government, the Bastile seems to have had but few inmates, at least few whom history has deemed worthy of being recorded; and during the war of the Fronde, and even before, the castle of Vincennes was the prison which received the captives of the highest class, such as the Duke of Beaufort, the Prince of Condé, and cardinal de Retz.

The first prisoner in the Bastile of whom any notice occurs during the regency, was a Spanish agent, named George de Casselny. Philip IV. of Spain had recently lost his consort Elizabeth, and it appears that Casselny was commissioned to make overtures for the monarch's marriage with that singular female the Duchess of Montpensier, a woman who had more manly qualities than her vacillating father, the Duke of Orleans. "There was a

certain Spaniard, named George de Casselny (says the duchess, in her memoirs), who had been made prisoner in Catalonia, and was on his parole; he went to M. de Surgis, at Orleans, to request that he would procure for him an interview with Monsieur (the Duke of Orleans), who put him off till he could see him at Paris. In consequence of this delay, the Spaniard's intention got wind, and he was put into the Bastile, and the cardinal (Mazarin), told Monsieur that it was a man who wanted to divert him from the service of the king by this proposal of marriage; which Monsieur believed and still believes. Many persons, however, affirm, that it was not a pretext, and that this gentleman had orders to make solid and sincere propositions for the marriage of his king with me, which he had thought it proper to communicate to Monsieur before he made them known to the court. Nevertheless, this poor creature was kept a prisoner for several years, and when he was set at liberty, he was sent out of the kingdom under a guard."

The next prisoner was one who, for a long period, was closely connected with Monsieur, the father of the duchess. Claude de Bourdeille, Count de Montresor, was born about 1608, and was a grand-nephew of that pleasant but unscrupulous writer Brantome, who bequeathed to him his mansion of Richemont. Montresor was early admitted into the train of the Duke of Orleans, and at length became his confidential friend, whom he consulted on all occasions. He availed himself of his influence to keep at a distance from the duke all the friends of Richelieu, to incite him still more against that minister, and to link him in confederacy with the Count of Soissons. In 1636, he went much further. In conjunction with Saint Ibal and others, he formed a plan for assassinating the cardinal,

and to this plan the duke and the count gave their assent. The murder was to be perpetrated as the minister was leaving the council chamber; Saint Ibal was behind him, ready to strike the blow, and waited only for an affirmative sign from the duke; but at this critical moment, either the courage of Orleans gave way, or his conscience smote him, for he turned away his head, and hurried from the spot. The cardinal consequently escaped.

While Montresor was subsequently busy in Guyenne, labouring to induce the Duke of Epernon and his son to take up arms for Monsieur, he was suddenly abandoned by his employer, who made his own peace with Richelieu. Montresor now retired to his estate, where, for more than five years, he lived in the utmost privacy. He had however, secret interviews with Monsieur, and, at his solicitation, he engaged in the conspiracy of Cinq Mars. Again he was deserted by him, and more disgracefully than in the first instance; for the dishonourable prince did not scruple to disavow the proceedings of his agent, and to aver that Cinq Mars and Montresor were the persons who had misled him. Montresor would have ascended the scaffold with Cinq Mars and de Thou, had he not prudently taken refuge in England, whence he did not return till the cardinal was no more.

When the government devolved on Anne of Austria, the enemies of Richelieu had reason to hope that they would become the dominant party. The haughty bearing which this hope led them to assume, obtained for them the appellation of "The Cabal of the Importants." They soon, however, contrived to disgust the queen-regent; and before twelve months had elapsed, Montresor Chateauneuf, the Duchess of Chevreuse, and several others of the faction were ordered to quit the court. Montresor retired for a

while to Holland. Late in 1645, he visited Paris, and, soon after, two letters to him, from the exiled Duchess de Chevreuse, having been intercepted, Mazarin sent him to the Bastile. The prisoner was removed to Vincennes, where he was rigorously treated for fourteen months. At length, moved by the solicitations of Montresor's relatives, the cardinal set him at liberty, and even offered him his friendship. Montresor, however, chose rather to league himself with Mazarin's bitterest foe, the celebrated Coadjutor, afterwards the Cardinal de Retz, and he took an active part in the war of the Fronde. In 1653 he was reconciled to the court, and from that time till his decease, which occurred in 1663, he led a peaceable life. Though ambition and a propensity to political intrigue could lead him to dip his hands in blood, Montresor is said to have had many social qualities; to have been generous, sincere, and a firm and ardent friend. His "Memoirs" form a valuable contribution to the history of his times.

Among the agents of the Duke of Orleans was Louis d'Astarac, Marquis of Fontrailles, a descendant from an ancient Armagnac family. When the conspiracy of Cinq Mars was formed. Fontrailles was despatched to Spain, to negotiate with the Spanish cabinet a treaty, for assistance to the conspirators. By this treaty, Spain engaged to furnish the Duke of Orleans with 12,000 infantry, 5000 cavalry, 400,000 crowns to raise levies in France; and a monthly allowance of 12,000 crowns for his private expenses. But, before any step could be taken to carry the treaty into effect, the conspiracy was rendered abortive. Fontrailles, against whom an order of arrest had been issued, was fortunate enough to escape to England. The death of the cardinal and of his vassal sovereign, which took place soon after, enabled the proscribed fugitive to

return to France. He became one of the Cabal of the Importants, and shared in the downfall of that faction. In the summer of 1647, he was sent to the Bastile; for what fault he was imprisoned I know not, or when he was released. Guy Patin intimates that the charge was not of a capital nature. Fontrailles died in 1677.

The next who passes before us is a brave and injured soldier. Count Josias de Rantzau was descended from an ancient family of Holstein, thirty-two members of which are said to have greatly distinguished themselves. The fidelity of this family to its sovereign was so remarkable, that the expression, "As faithful as a Rantzau to his king," passed into a proverb. Josias was born in 1610, and seems first to have borne arms in the Swedish service; he commanded a body of Swedes at the siege of Andernach, headed the Swedish left wing at the combat of Pakenau, and was present at the siege of Brisac. In 1635, he accompanied the celebrated Oxenstiern into France, where Louis XIII. appointed him a major-general, and colonel of two regiments. The subsequent career of Rantzau was often successful, and was never stained with disgrace. He effectually covered the retreat of the French after the raising of the siege of Dole, victoriously defended St. Jean de Lône against Galas, bore a conspicuous part in the subsequent campaigns in Flanders and Germany, and was twice maimed at the siege of Arras, and displayed signal valour at the siege of Aire. Fortune deserted him at the combat of Honnecourt and the battle of Dutlingen, in 1642 and 1643, and in both instances he was taken prisoner. She, however, soon became favourable to him. Between 1645 and 1649, he made himself master of Gravelines, Dixmude, Lens, and all the maritime towns of Flanders. To reward his ser-

vices he received the government of Gravelines and Dunkirk, and was raised to the rank of marshal. Mazarin, nevertheless, suspected him of being connected with his enemies, and in February, 1649, the marshal was conveyed to the Bastile, where he remained for eleven months. His innocence being at length ascertained, he was set at liberty; but a dropsy, which he had contracted in his confinement, proved fatal to him in the course of a few months. He died in September, 1650. Rantzau was possessed of brilliant valour, much talent and military skill, and spoke all the principal languages of Europe: his only defect was an inordinate love of wine. Like our Nelson, but even in a greater degree, his person had been severely mutilated; he had lost an ear, an eye, a leg, and an arm. To this fact the following epitaph alludes:—

> "But half of great Rantzau this tomb contains,
> The other half in battle fields remains;
> His limbs and fame he widely spread around,
> And still, though mangled, conqueror was he found;
> His blood a hundred victories did acquire,
> And nothing but his heart by Mars was left entire!"

A brawl brought to the Bastile, in 1652, the Count de Rieux, a son of the Duke of Elbœuf. A dispute with the Prince of Tarentum, as to precedence, gave rise to it. The Prince of Condé, the great Condé, was the other actor. "The Prince of Condé," says the Duchess of Montpensier, " took the part of the Prince of Tarentum, who is nearly related to him, against the Count de Rieux, and one day he got heated in the dispute; he imagined that the Count de Rieux had pushed him, which obliged him to return it by a box on the ear; the Count de Rieux then gave him a blow. The prince, who had no sword, made a dart at that of the Baron de Migenne, who was present. M. de Rohan, who was also there, put himself

between them, and got out the Count de Rieux, whom his royal highness (the Duke of Orleans) sent to the Bastile for having dared to fail in respect. Many persons say, that the prince struck first; if he did so, he must have taken some gesture of the count for an insult, for though he is very passionate, he is not so much so as to do an action of this kind. I saw him after dinner, and he said, 'You see a man who has been beaten for the first time in his life.' The Count de Rieux remained in the Bastile till the arrival of M. de Lorraine, who set him free, and blamed him very much." It must have been a ludicrous sight to see a prince of the blood, the victor of Rocroi, Fribourg, Nordlingen, and Lens, at fisticuffs amidst a ring of courtiers, in the palace of the Duke of Orleans! "This was not the way," remarks Voltaire, "to regain the hearts of the Parisians."

The leaders of the Frondeur faction were by no means tolerant of censure, even when it came from clerical lips. Bernard Guyard, a Dominican, had reason to repent his having too honestly indulged in it. Guyard, who was born in 1601, at Craon, in Anjou, took the religious habit, and was admitted, in 1645, a doctor of the Sorbonne, and became popular for his pulpit eloquence, so much so that Anne of Austria appointed him her preacher, and the Duchess of Orleans chose him as her confessor. While the war of the Fronde was being carried on—a war of which it has wittily and truly been said, that it ought to be recorded in burlesque verse—Guyard ventured to reprobate, in the pulpit, the conduct of those ambitious and unprincipled personages by whom its flames had been lighted up. The punishment of his offence followed close upon the commission of it. As he was leaving the church, he was arrested, and conveyed to the Bastile, where he

continued for some months. He died in 1674, at which period he was theological professor in the convent of St. James. All his works have long since ceased to attract notice, with the exception, perhaps, of "The Fatality of St. Cloud," which is a paradoxical attempt to prove that not Clement, nor a Dominican, but a Leaguer, disguised as a monk, was the murderer of Henry III.

During the war of the Fronde, the Bastile, for a short time, and for the last, was again a fortress as well as a prison; but in the latter character its services were only once required. When, in 1649, the queen-regent suddenly quitted Paris with the young king, she imprudently neglected to throw into the Bastile a garrison. It was guarded by only twenty-two soldiers, who had neither ammunition nor provisions. Du Tremblai, the governor, was therefore obliged to yield. The custody of the fortress was committed to Peter Broussel, for whose deliverance the Parisians had risen in arms on the day of the Barricades, and from whom he had received the flattering appellations of the father and the protector of the people. As Broussel was an aged man, his son, La Louvière, was joined with him in the government. In 1652, Broussel was appointed provost of the merchants, and the keeping of the Bastile remained with La Louvière alone.

The two pieces of cannon which, in 1649, the Parisians fired at the Bastile to hasten its submission, would have been the only artillery employed, either against it or by it, had not the daring of a woman brought its guns into action. The Duchess of Montpensier, who was called Mademoiselle, had recently distinguished herself by her spirited conduct at Orleans. Being sent by her father to that city, to encourage his partisans, she was at first refused admittance, but she forced her way in, through a hole in a gate,

roused the people in her favour, and succeeded in preventing the king's troops from occupying that important post. She was now at Paris, and soon found a fresh opportunity to display her courage and presence of mind. On the second of July, 1652, the sanguinary battle of the suburb of St. Anthony was raging; the army of the Prince of Condé, overborne by the far superior numbers which Turenne led against him, could barely hold its ground; the prince had in vain entreated for its admission at various gates; the enemy, reinforced, was preparing for a new attack on its front and flanks; and, pent in between the king's troops and the city walls, its destruction seemed to be inevitable. At this perilous moment it was saved by the Duchess of Montpensier. First from her father, and next from the municipal authorities sitting at the Town Hall, she in a manner extorted an order for opening the gate of St. Anthony to the nearly overwhelmed battalions of Condé. She then ascended to the summit of the Bastile, and directed the cannon to be charged, removed from the city side, and pointed to the opposite quarter. They were opened upon the royalists, who pressed on the retreating Condéans, and their commanding fire compelled the pursuers to fall back beyond their range. Mademoiselle was at that time cherishing a hope that she should be united to her cousin the king, or at least to some crowned head; and it was with allusion to this circumstance that, when he heard she had ordered the firing, Mazarin coolly remarked, "Those cannon-shots have killed her husband."

Four months did not pass away before, tired of wasting their lives and properties in a contest which could benefit only the privileged classes, the Parisians invited the king to return to his capital. The monarch entered it on the 21st of October, 1652. The faction of the Fronde was

annihilated, and its leaders were scattered in all directions; their vanity, selfishness, and utter want of principle and patriotism deserved such a fate. Had they been animated by noble motives, had they possessed even a moderate share of wisdom and virtue, they might have laid the groundwork of a stable and beneficent government, and thereby saved their country from innumerable immediate and remote evils. But

> "The sensual and the base rebel in vain,
> Slaves by their own compulsion!"

As soon as the king had entered Paris, the Bastile was summoned, and La Louvière was informed that, if he were rash enough to stand a siege, the gibbet would be his portion. Too prudent to run so useless and formidable a risk, he readily gave up his charge. From the moment when Mademoiselle directed its fire upon the king's troops, a hundred and thirty-seven years elapsed before the Bastile again heard the roar of artillery fired in anger.

One of the first acts of Louis XIV. was to hold a bed of justice, in which he ordered the registration of an edict to abridge the power of the parliament. By this edict, the parliament was strictly prohibited from deliberating on state and financial affairs, and instituting any proceedings whatever against the ministers whom he might be pleased to employ. Louis was then only a boy of fourteen, and this act was of course the work of Mazarin; but, young as he was, the monarch was already thoroughly imbued with the principles on which it was framed. Three years afterwards he gave a striking proof of this. The parliament having ventured to manifest a faint opposition to some of his many oppressive fiscal edicts, he took a step which showed how deeply despotism was ingrained into his character. He was engaged in the

chase, at Vincennes, when information was brought to him that his will was disputed. Hurrying back to Paris, he entered the parliament chamber, the sanctuary of justice, booted, spurred, whip in hand, and thus addressed the assembly of venerable magistrates: "Sirs, everybody knows the calamities which the meetings of the parliament have produced. I will henceforth prevent these meetings. I order you, therefore, to desist from those which you have begun, with respect to the edicts which, in my late bed of justice, I directed to be registered. You Mr. First President, I forbid to allow of these assemblies; and I forbid every one of you to demand them." Having thus spoken he departed, leaving his hearers in astonishment. He was then a beardless youth, who had not reached his seventeenth year. The members of the parliament might well have called to mind the words of Scripture—"If these things are done in the green tree, what will be done in a dry?" Six years afterwards Mazarin died, and thenceforth Louis had no prime minister; he became, in every sense of the word, the head of the government, the autocrat of France.

A new era, that of abject submission to the monarch, and almost idolatrous worship of his person and greatness, commenced when the war of the Fronde was over. The slaves had had their Saturnalia, and they sank back—we may almost say rushed back—into a slavery more degrading than that from which they had for a moment emerged. There were no longer any Epernons, ruling their provinces as they pleased, and bearding their sovereign; the feudal pride was extinct. This would have been a happy circumstance for France, had the nobles, in losing their pride, preserved their dignity. But from one extreme they passed to the other. The power which

they had lost, which was, in fact, but the power of doing mischief, they might have replaced by a power more honourable and durable, that which would have arisen from promoting the welfare and happiness of those whom they called their vassals. But their extensive domains were looked on only as mines, from which the last grain of gold was to be extracted, that they might squander it in the capital. It seemed as though it were impossible for them to exist out of the king's presence; and when they were excluded from it, they lamented and whined in a manner which excites at once wonder and contempt. The consequences of this general prostration were slowly, but surely and fatally, unfolded.

Let us revert to the captives of the Bastile. The destiny of John Herauld Gourville, who was born in 1625, was a singular one; he not only raised himself from a humble state to be the companion and friend of princes, but was appointed to be one of the representatives of his sovereign while in exile, and while a Parisian court of justice was hanging him in effigy as a convicted runaway peculator. After having received a scanty education, he was placed in an attorney's office by his widowed mother. Having by his cleverness fortunately attracted the notice of the Duke de la Rochefoucault, the author of the "Maxims," that nobleman made him his secretary. During the war of the Fronde, Gourville displayed such talent and activity, that he acquired the warm friendship of his employer and the Prince of Condé. His gratitude engaged him in many desperate adventures for their service, and the mode in which he raised the supplies for them was sometimes not much unlike that of a bandit; the moral code of the Frondeurs was not remarkable for its strictness. When Rochefoucault became weary of the inglorious contest in

which he was an actor, Gourville negotiated the duke's peace with the court; and in doing this he manifested so much ability and prudence that Mazarin despatched him to Bordeaux, to treat with the Prince of Conti. In this mission he was successful; and he was rewarded by being appointed commissary-general of the French army in Catalonia. At the close of the campaign of 1655, he returned to Paris, and Mazarin, who suspected that he came to intrigue for the Prince of Conti, shut him up in the Bastile. In his Memoirs, Gourville candidly confesses that his six months' imprisonment was insufferably wearisome, and that he could think of little else than how he should put an end to it. He was maturing a plan of escape, in concert with six other prisoners, when the cardinal relented, took him again into favour, and even prevailed on Fouquet to give him the lucrative place of receiver-general of the province of Guienne. In this office Gourville amassed an immense fortune, which he increased by his extraordinary good luck at play. When Fouquet fell, the whole of his subalterns were involved in his fall; but, far from deserting him in his calamity, Gourville nobly furnished 100,000 livres to assist in gaining over some of his enemies, and a still larger sum for the establishment of his son, the Count de Vaux. He soon, however, became himself an object of impeachment, on a charge of peculation, and he deemed it prudent to quit France. At that moment there was certainly no chance of his obtaining a fair trial. After having visited England and Holland, he settled at Brussels. Though he was compelled to live in a foreign country, Gourville still preserved a strong affection for his native land, and he proved it, by influencing the Princes of Brunswick and Hanover in favour of France. For this patriotic conduct

Louis XIV. nominated him his plenipotentiary at the court of Brunswick; while at the same moment his enemies at Paris obtained against him a degrading sentence from his judges! That not a love of justice, but a desire to extort money from him, gave rise to his being prosecuted, is made evident by Colbert having offered a pardon, at the price of 800,000 livres, which he afterwards reduced to 600,000. Gourville, however, either could not or would not purchase this costly commodity. He was subsequently employed as a diplomatist in Spain, and again in Germany; and at length in 1681, a free pardon was granted to him. From that time he led a tranquil life in the French capital, in habits of friendship with, and much beloved by, the most eminent men of genius and rank. At one period there was an intention of making him the successor of Colbert, as comptroller-general of the finances, an office for which he was well qualified; but he had ceased to be ambitious of dangerous honours, and was happy to avoid them. The length of time which his servants continued in his service, and the cordial manner in which he speaks of them, afford strong proofs of his kind-heartedness; never did a selfish or harsh master long retain a domestic. Haughtiness to inferiors is the miserable make-shift of a man who has no true dignity to support his pretensions. Gourville mentions four persons who had been with him for fifteen, seventeen, twenty-five, and thirty-two years. He died in 1703, at the age of seventy-eight. His Memoirs, which he composed in four months, to amuse himself while he was confined by a disease in the leg, are deservedly praised by Madame de Sévigné and Voltaire.

The next who appears on the scene was a noble, whom Madame de Sévigné characterizes as "a hero of romance,

who does not resemble the rest of mankind." This is somewhat exaggerated, but not wholly untrue. Armand de Grammont, Count de Guiche, who was born in 1638, was a proficient in all manly exercises, splendid in dress and equipage, spirited, witty, well educated, handsome in person, and cultivated in mind. His valour was early proved, at the sieges of Landrecy, Valenciennes, and Dunkirk. In a voluptuous court, and with his attractive qualities, it is not wonderful that Guiche was engaged in amorous intrigues. His desire of conquest aimed so high —Henrietta Stuart, Duchess of Orleans, was its great object—that Louis XIV. thrice exiled him; and it was probably on this account that he became an inmate of the Bastile, from which prison he was released in the autumn of 1660. Having a third time offended, he was sent to Poland, where he distinguished himself in the war against the Turks. At the end of two years, he was recalled; but it was not long before he again fell into disgrace, by participating in the despicable conduct of the Marquis de Vardes, which will be described in the sketch of that courtier's career. Guiche was banished to Holland. Too active to remain unemployed, he served in the campaign against the Bishop of Munster, and on board the Dutch Squadron, in the sea-fight with the English, off the Texel. He was allowed to return to France in 1669, but was not re-admitted at court till two years afterwards. It was he who, in 1672, led the way at the celebrated passage of the Rhine, near Tollhuis; an exploit which is extravagantly lauded by Boileau. He died at Creutznach, in Germany, in 1673: excessive chagrin, occasioned by Montecuculi having defeated him, was the cause of his death. Guiche is the author of a volume of Memoirs concerning the United Provinces.

The first important act of Louis XIV., after his taking the administration of public affairs into his own hands, was the disgracing and ruining Fouquet, the superintendent of the finances. Nicholas Fouquet, a son of Viscount de Vaux, was born at Paris, in 1615, and was educated for the legal profession. At twenty he was master of requests, and at thirty-five he filled the very considerable office of attorney-general to the parliament of Paris. It would have been happy for him had he steadily pursued his career in the magistracy, instead of deviating into a path that was beset with dangers. During the troubles of the Fronde he was unalterably faithful to the queen-mother, and in gratitude for this she raised him, in 1652, to the post of superintendent. It was a fatal boon.

By all who were connected with it, the French treasury seems, in those days, to have been considered as a mine which they were privileged to work for their own benefit. Mazarin had recently been a wholesale plunderer of it; and there can be little doubt that Fouquet was a peculator to a vast extent. Yet the superintendent had one merit, which was wanting in other depredators—though he took, he likewise gave; for at one period, when money ran short, he mortgaged his property and his wife's, and borrowed on his own bills, to supply the necessities of the state.

The fatal failing of Fouquet was his magnificent extravagance. He had a taste for splendour and lavish expenditure which might have qualified him for an oriental sovereign. On his estate at Vaux he built a mansion, or rather a palace, which threw into the shade the country residences of the French monarch—for Versailles was not then in existence. Whole hamlets were levelled to the ground to afford space for its gardens.

The building was sumptuously decorated, and in every part of it was painted his device, a squirrel, with the ambitious motto "*Quò non ascendam?*" Whither shall I not rise? It is a curious circumstance, that the squirrel was represented as being pursued by a snake, which was the arms of Colbert, the bitter enemy of Fouquet. The edifice cost eighteen millions of livres; a sum equivalent to three times as much at the present day.

The largesses of the superintendent, which in many cases deserve the name of bribes, were immense. Great numbers of the courtiers did not blush to become his pensioners. On extraordinary occasions they also received presents from him. Each of the nobles, who was invited with Louis XIV. to the grand entertainment at Vaux, found in his bed-chamber a purse filled with gold; which, says a sarcastic writer, "the nobles did not forget to take away." There was another abundant source of expense, which arose out of his licentious passions; he lavished immense sums in purchasing the venal charms of the French ladies of distinction, and was eminently successful in finding sellers. "There were few at court," says Madame de Motteville, "who did not sacrifice to the golden calf." Policy, no doubt, had a share in prompting his liberality to the courtiers; and, perhaps, it sometimes was mingled with lust and vanity in his gifts to frail females of rank; but we may attribute to a purer motive the kindness and courtesy which he manifested to persons of talent. The result was quite natural; the great deserted him in his hour of danger and disgrace, the people of talent clung with more tenacity than ever to their fallen benefactor and friend.

Mazarin, when on his death-bed, is said to have awakened the fears and suspicions of Louis against

Fouquet; and, to deepen the impression which he had made, he left behind him two deadly foes of the superintendent. These foes were Le Tellier and Colbert, of whom the latter was the most inveterate and the most dangerous. When Louis formed the resolution of being his own prime minister, Fouquet, who evidently wished to succeed to the power of Richelieu and Mazarin, essayed to turn the monarch from his purpose, by daily heaping on him a mass of dry, intricate, and erroneous financial statements. He failed in his attempt. These papers the king every evening examined, with the secret assistance of Colbert, whose acuteness and practised skill instantly unravelled their artful tangles, and exposed their errors.

It was not alone the squandering of the royal treasure that irritated Louis; though that would have been a sufficiently exciting cause to a man whose own lavish habits required large supplies. He asserted, and might perhaps believe, that the offender aspired to sovereignty. In a long conversation with the president Lamoignon, he said, "Fouquet wished to make himself Duke of Brittany, and king of the neighbouring isles; he won over every body by his profusion; there was not a single soul in whom I could put confidence." So much was he impressed with this idea, that he repeated it over and over to the president. For this absurd fear there was no other ground than that the superintendent had purchased and fortified Belleisle; a measure which was prompted by patriotic motives, it being his design to make that island an emporium of commerce. There is said to have been another and a not less powerful cause for the monarch's hatred of Fouquet; the superintendent had been imprudent enough to attempt to include La Vallière in the long catalogue of his mistresses, and this was an offence not to be pardoned by the proudest and vainest of kings.

As soon as the ruin of Fouquet was determined upon, the most profound dissimulation was used by the king and Colbert, to prevent him from suspecting their purpose. All his measures seemed to give perfect satisfaction; unlimited trust was apparently placed in him; and hints were thrown out, that the coveted post of prime minister was within his reach. The hints had a further purpose than that of blinding him to the peril in which he stood; they were meant to rob him of a shield against injustice. By virtue of his office as attorney-general to the parliament, he had the privilege of being tried only by the assembled chambers; but, as it was intended that his trial should take place before a packed tribunal, it was necessary to divest him of the privilege. For this reason it was insinuated, that the post of attorney-general stood in the way of his being raised to the premiership, and also of his obtaining the blue riband. Fouquet fell into the snare, and sold his office for 1,400,000 livres, which sum, with a blind generosity, he instantly lent to the Exchequer. To confirm Fouquet's delusion, Louis graced with his presence a gorgeous festival which was held at Vaux. But the splendour of the place, the excessive magnificence of the entertainment, and the presumptuousness of the superintendent's motto, roused his anger to such a pitch that, had not the queen-mother remonstrated, he would have committed the unkingly act of arresting Fouquet on the spot.

When the courage inspired by passion had evaporated, Louis delayed yet awhile to effect his purpose, till he had guarded in all possible ways against the danger which was to be apprehended from the formidable conspirator. Had Fouquet been capable of calling up legions from the earth by the stamp of his foot, more precautions could

not have been taken. The blow was struck at last. Louis was at Nantes, to which city he had removed under the idea that it would be easier to accomplish the arrest there than at Paris. Thither he was followed by Fouquet. Some of the superintendent's friends warned him of the peril which hung over him, but he gave no credence to their tidings. On the 5th of September, 1661, as he was leaving the council, he was arrested, and was conveyed without delay to the castle of Angers. Messengers were immediately despatched to Paris, to seize his papers, and to order the arrest of many of his partisans.

Fouquet was bandied about from prison to prison, from Angers to Amboise, Moret, and Vincennes, till he was finally lodged in the Bastile. He bore his misfortune with an unshaken mind. His enemies, meanwhile, were proceeding with the most malignant activity and with a perfect contempt of justice and decorum. It was the common talk of Paris, that Colbert would be satisfied with nothing less than the execution of the superintendent. He was even plainly charged by Fouquet with having fraudulently made in his papers a multitude of alterations. Le Tellier though less openly violent than Colbert was equally hostile. For the trial of the prisoner twenty-two commissioners were picked out from the French parliaments; nearly all—if not all—of them were notoriously inimical to him or connected with persons who were known to be so, and at their head was the chancellor Seguier, one of his most deadly enemies.

One benefit the fallen minister derived from this injustice and from the protracted trial which ensued; public opinion, which at first had been adverse to him, gradually grew more and more favourable. Fouquet the peculator, brought to judgment before an honest and impartial

tribunal, would have excited no sympathy; Fouquet, persecuted by his rivals for power, and destined to be legally assassinated, could not fail to excite a warm interest in the mind of every one who was not destitute of honourable feelings.

Those who were in habits of intimacy with Fouquet needed no other stimulus than the benefits, or the winning courtesies which they had experienced from him. He had on his side all who loved or practised literature, all who could be captivated by prepossessing manners and boundless generosity. "Never," says Voltaire, "did a placeman have more personal friends, never was a persecuted man better served in his misfortunes." Many men of letters wielded the pen in his behalf, with a courage which deserves no small praise when we consider that the Bastile was staring them in the face. Pelisson in his dungeon tasked all his powers to defend his ruined master; La Fontaine, in a touching elegy, vainly strove to awake the clemency of Louis; Loret eulogised Fouquet in his "Mercure Burlesque," and was punished by the loss of his pension; Hesnault, the translator of Lucretius, attacked Colbert in the bitterest and boldest of sonnets; and a crowd of other assailants showered epigrams and lampoons on the vindictive minister. The authors were, in general, lucky enough to find impunity; but numbers of news-writers, printers, and hawkers, were seized, all of whom were imprisoned, and some were sent from prison to the galleys.

Fouquet began by denying the competency of the tribunal before which he was summoned. He was, however, compelled to appear; but, though he answered interrogatories, he persisted in protesting against the authority of his judges. He defended himself with

admirable skill, eloquence, and moderation. There were, indeed, moments when he was roused to retaliate. A single example of the pungency with which he could reply, will show that his persecutors were not wise in provoking him. Behind a mirror, at his country-house of St. Mandé, was found a sketch of a paper, drawn up by him fifteen years before, and evidently long forgotten by him. It contained instructions to his friends how they were to proceed, in case of an attempt being made to subvert his power. This was construed into a proof of conspiracy. Seguier having pertinaciously called on him to own that the drawing up of such a paper was a crime against the state, Fouquet said, "I confess that it is a foolish and wild act, but not a state crime. A crime against the state is when, holding a principal office, and being entrusted with the secrets of the prince, the individual all at once deserts to the enemy, engages the whole of his family in the same interest, causes governors to open the gates of cities to the enemy's army, and to close them against their rightful master, and betrays to the hostile party the secrets of the government—this, sir, is what is called a crime against the state." This was a stunning blow to the chancellor, for it was the past conduct of that magistrate himself that was thus forcibly described by the prisoner.

The trial lasted three years. It was not the fault of some of his judges that it was not brought to a speedier issue. They listened with reluctance to his eloquent defence, and would fain have cut it short. Possort, one of them, who was an uncle of Colbert, once exclaimed, on Fouquet closing his speech, "Thank Heaven! he cannot complain that he has been prevented from talking his fill!" Others, still more insensible to shame, made a motion, that he should be restricted to the mere answering of

questions: they were, however, overruled. It was not till the middle of December, 1664, that Talon, the advocate-general, summed up the evidence, and demanded that the culprit should be hanged on a gallows, purposely erected in the Palace Court. But the time for this excessive severity was gone by. Some of the judges had become accessible to feelings of pity; others had been won over by the potent influence of gold, of which the superintendent's friends undoubtedly availed themselves to a considerable extent. Among the most conspicuous of those who leaned to the side of mercy were MM. d'Ormesson and Roquesante, men of unquestionable integrity. Only nine voted for death; a majority of the commissioners, thirteen in number, gave their suffrage for confiscation of property and perpetual banishment.

The king is said to have been grievously disappointed by this sentence. Colbert was furious. In one of her letters, written at the moment, Madame de Sévigné, who had a warm esteem for Fouquet, says, "Colbert is so exceedingly enraged, that we may expect from him something unjust and atrocious enough to drive us all to despair again." In another letter, she hints her fears that poison may be employed; Guy Patin was also of the same opinion. Neither poison nor steel was, however, resorted to; it was probably thought that to render the life of Fouquet a burthen to him, would be a more exquisite gratification than taking of it away. To grant mercy has always been regarded as the noblest prerogative of a monarch; to refuse it was more to the taste of Louis. He altered the sentence of Fouquet from banishment to endless imprisonment in a remote fortress, and this was in mockery called a commutation of the penalty. Fouquet was immediately sent off to Pignerol, and the

members of his family, who were doomed to suffer for his errors, were scattered in various directions. His judges did not wholly escape without marks of the king's anger. M. de Roquesante, a native of the sunny Provence, who had spoken in favour of the prisoner, was banished, in the depth of winter, to the distant and imperfectly civilised province of Lower Brittany.

On his way to Pignerol, and during his captivity there, Fouquet was treated with great harshness. About six months after his arrival, he was placed in imminent danger. The lightning fell on the citadel where he was confined, and blew up the powder magazine. Numbers of persons were buried under the ruins, but he stood in the recess of a window and remained unhurt. There is a singular veil of mystery hanging over his last days. He is generally said to have died at Pignerol, in 1680; yet Gourville, his friend, positively states him to have been set at liberty before his decease, and he adds, that he received a letter from him. Voltaire, too, declares that the fact of the liberation was confirmed to him by the Countess de Vaux, the daughter-in-law of Fouquet; but here all clue to the subject is lost. It has recently been suggested that Fouquet may have again been arrested, and that he was the individual who is known by the appellation of the Man in the Iron Mask.

While fidelity in friendship, inviolably preserved under the most trying circumstances, shall continue to be admired by mankind, the name of Paul Pelisson will always be mentioned with respect. He had talents, too, which were of no mean order. Pelisson who, from affection to his mother, assumed also her maiden name of Fontanier, was born in 1624, at Bezières, and was brought up in the Protestant faith. He attained an early and rapid pro-

ficiency in literature and languages; nor were severer studies neglected—for at the age of only nineteen he produced an excellent Latin paraphrase of the first book of Justinian's Institutes. He was beginning to shine at the bar, when he was attacked by small-pox. The disease so excessively disfigured his countenance, and impaired his constitution, that he was under the necessity of relinquishing his profession, and retiring into the country to recruit his health.

As soon as Pelisson was again able to take a part in active life, he settled in Paris. It was not long before he acquired a multitude of friends; and the French Academy, in return for a history which he wrote of its early labours, made him a supernumerary member, and destined for him the first vacancy which should occur. Fouquet, who knew his abilities, appointed him his chief clerk, and reposed in him an implicit confidence, which was well deserved. Had Fouquet followed the advice of his assistant, who counselled him never to part with his office of attorney-general, he would have done wisely. When this advice came to the knowledge of Louis, he said, "the clerk is more sharp-sighted than the master."

Pelisson shared the fate of Fouquet; he was sent to the Conciërgerie, whence he was removed to the Bastile. All attempts to elicit from him the secrets of the superintendent were made in vain. Once only, to answer a purpose, he seemed to make a disclosure. Fearing that, from not knowing whether the documents were in existence, Fouquet might commit himself in his answers to certain questions, Pelisson feigned to divulge some unimportant particulars which related to the subject. Fouquet, who was astonished at this seeming defection of his friend, was confronted with him, and denied the correctness of what

had been stated: "Sir," said Pelisson, in an emphatic tone, "you would not deny so boldly if you did not know that all the papers concerning that affair are destroyed." Fouquet instantly comprehended the stratagem, and acted accordingly.

In the early part of his confinement, Pelisson found means to compose three memorials in defence of Fouquet. For eloquence and argument they may be considered as his master-pieces; they were published, and produced a strong impression. As a punishment, he was still more closely immured, and pen and paper were withheld from him; but he contrived to foil his persecutors, by writing with ink made of burnt crust and wine, on the blank leaves and margins of the religious works which he was allowed to read. They were equally unsuccessful when, hoping that he might drop some unguarded words, they gave him, as an attendant, a spy, who concealed cunning under the mask of coarse simplicity. Pelisson saw through the deception, and adroitly converted the spy into an instrument of his own.

The imprisonment of Pelisson lasted four years and a half. Among the means which he employed to beguile his lonely hours is said to have been that of taming a spider; a task which he effected so completely that at a signal it would fetch its prey from the further end of the room, or even take it out of his hand. It is, however, doubtful whether Pelisson was the person who performed this. De Renneville, who is good authority on this subject, ascribes the taming of the spider to the Count de Lauzun; and adds, that the jailer, St. Mars, brutally crushed the insect, and exclaimed that criminals like Lauzun did not deserve to enjoy the slightest amusement.

The solicitations of Pelisson's friends at length procured

his release; in memory of which he ever after yearly liberated some unfortunate prisoner. After some lapse of time, he was even received into the good graces of Louis, who probably thought that the man who had been faithful to a ruined minister would not be wanting in fidelity to his sovereign. It was, besides, no small merit in the king's eyes, that Pelisson had become a Catholic. Louis first appointed him his historiographer, with a pension; then gave him several valuable benefices; and, lastly, entrusted him with the management of the fund which was employed in purchasing proselytes. Pelisson died in 1693.

Pelisson was not the only literary character who was drawn into the vortex by the sinking of Fouquet. The gay and witty Epicurean philosopher, St. Evremond, was punished for the crime of being a friend of the fallen superintendent. Charles St. Evremond was born in 1613, at St. Denis le Guast, near Coutances. From the study of the law, and the prospect of a high station in the magistracy, he was seduced by his love of arms, and, at the age of sixteen, he obtained an ensigncy. He still, however, retained his taste for philosophy and literature. By his bravery he acquired the esteem of his superiors; and that esteem was heightened by his varied acquirements and the charm of his conversation. That he might always enjoy the pleasure of his society, the Duke of Enghien appointed him lieutenant of his guards. In this post St. Evremond fought gallantly at Rocroi, Fribourg, and Nordlingen, in the last of which battles he was dangerously wounded. His familiar intercourse with the prince was not of long duration; Enghien delighted to see others exposed to the wit and raillery of his lieutenant, but he could not endure to be himself their object. St.

Evremond ventured to aim some pleasantries at his princely protector, and the great Condé had the littleness to take offence, and to insist on the offender resigning his commission in the guards. In the war of the Fronde, St. Evremond served the royal cause with pen and sword, and he was rewarded with a pension and the rank of major-general. Some satirical remarks on Mazarin, which he soon after made at a dinner party, were the cause of his being thrown into the Bastile. Mazarin, however, was not of an implacable nature, like his predecessor Richelieu. At the expiration of three months he set the prisoner free, took him into favour, and afterwards, from among a crowd of rivals, selected him as his companion, when he went to negotiate the peace of the Pyrenees. Dissatisfied with the terms of that peace, St. Evremond gave vent to his dissatisfaction, in a private letter to the Marshal de Créqui. In writing it he unconsciously wrote his own sentence of banishment. A copy of it was found among the papers of Fouquet; and Colbert, who rejoiced to have an opportunity of injuring a friend of Fouquet, malignantly represented it in such a light to Louis XIV. that an order was issued to convey the author to the Bastile. St. Evremond was riding in the forest of Orleans when he received intelligence from his friends of the danger that hung over him. As he did not wish to pay a second visit to a state prison, he provided for his safety by an immediate and rapid flight. In England he was welcomed with open arms, and was idolized by the wits and courtiers. In 1664 he visited Holland, where he met with an equally cordial reception, and gained the friendship of the Prince of Orange. Charles II. invited him to return to England, in 1670, and settled on him a pension. Henceforth, till his decease, which took place

in 1703, he continued to reside in London. His friends in France made repeated efforts to obtain his recall; but they could not succeed till 1689, when Louis XIV. was pleased to grant their request. St. Evremond refused to accept the tardy boon. Living at his ease in a free country, and in the highest society, and admired and esteemed by the fair, the witty, and the noble, he was too wise to put himself into "circumscription and confine," and purchase the privilege of bending before a despotic monarch, at the risk of being condemned to solitary meditation in one of the towers of the Bastile. St. Evremond was ninety when he died, but he preserved his faculties to the last. He was interred in Westminster Abbey. His poetry never rises above mediocrity, and does not always reach it; but his prose is often excellent. Justice has scarcely been done to him either by La Harpe or Voltaire.

A harder fate than that of voluntary exile was the lot of Simon Morin, an insane visionary, a man of humble birth, who was born about 1623, at Richemont, in Normandy. His horrible death, which was in fact a judicial murder, perpetrated by a fanaticism far worse than his own, leaves an indelible stain on the character of the judges by whom it was directed. Morin was originally a clerk in the war-office, but lost his situation by neglecting his duties; and he subsequently gained a scanty subsistence as a copyist, for which he was well qualified by the beauty of his hand-writing. His reason appears to have been early affected, as he must have been under twenty when he was first put into prison for his extravagant ideas in religious matters. After his release, he seems to have gradually become more and more deranged. Like all madmen of his class, however, he gained numer-

ous proselytes, who listened to his harangues, and read his printed reveries, with implicit belief. His success drew on him the attention of the government, and, in July 1644, he was sent to the Bastile. At the expiration of twenty months, he was set at liberty. Imprisonment had only heightened his malady, and he consequently laboured with more vigour than ever to disseminate his opinions. Those opinions he embodied in a work entitled, "Thoughts of Morin, with his Canticles and Spiritual Quatrains," dedicated to the king. He called himself the Son of Man, and maintained that Christ was incorporated in him; that in his person was to take place the second advent of the Saviour in a state of glory; and that the result would be a general reformation of the Church, and the conversion of all people to the true faith. There was much more of the same kind; he was in France what Brothers, long afterwards, was in England. Of his tenets, several bear a resemblance to those which, later in the 17th century, were held by the Quietists. The publication of this volume again brought the police upon him. For some time he eluded them, but he was at last discovered, and recommitted to the Bastile. In 1649, he retracted his errors, and was released, and he repeated his retractation four months after his being set free. It was not long, however, before he relapsed, and for this he was sent to the Conciergerie, whence he was transferred to the Petites Maisons, as an incurable lunatic. The last was the only sensible measure which was adopted with respect to him. By another abjuration, he once more recovered his liberty; and, as soon as he was let loose, he once more asserted his claim to be an incarnation of the Deity. There can be little doubt that he had short lucid intervals, and that it was during these intervals that he renounced his errors.

Thus, alternately raving and recanting, Morin went on till 1661, when, in an evil hour, he contracted an intimacy with a man who was no less a visionary than he himself was, and whose nature was deeply tinctured with malignity and deceit. This man, John Desmarets de St. Sorlin, a member of the French Academy, was the author of several works, now sunk into oblivion, among which are a ponderous epic called Clovis, and several theatrical pieces. From his own showing, he appears to have been in youth a monster of immorality; and though in advanced life he affected piety, his conduct did not prove his heart to be much ameliorated; he became fanatical instead of becoming virtuous. A brief specimen, from some of his rhapsodies, will show how completely his wits were "turned the seamy side without." He asserted that God, in his infinite goodness, had given him the key of the treasure of the Apocalypse; that he was Eliachim Michael, a prophet; that he had the Divine command to raise an army of 144,000 men, bearing the seal of God on their foreheads, which army was to be headed by the king, to exterminate the impious and the Jansenists; and that Louis XIV. was indicated by the prophets as the person who was destined to drive out the Turks, and extend throughout the whole earth the kingdom of Christ. Had not Desmarets been a hater of the Jansenists, and a flatterer of the monarch, he would undoubtedly have been sent to study the Apocalypse in the solitude of a prison.

The trite proverb, that "two of a trade cannot agree," was verified by Desmarets; he resolved to destroy the man who dared to make pretensions that eclipsed his own. To effect his purpose, he acted with the cunning of a lunatic, and the dark-heartedness of a fiend. By paying assiduous court to Morin, by pretending to be one of his

most submissive disciples, and even by going so far as to write him a letter, unequivocally recognising him as the Son of Man, he contrived to insinuate himself into the confidence of his unfortunate victim, and to draw from him his most secret thoughts. In the course of their conversations, Morin is said to have declared, among other things, that unless the king acknowledged his mission he would die. Having thus furnished himself with evidence against the man whom he had deluded, Desmarets hastened to denounce him as a heretic and traitor. Orders were issued for arresting Morin, who was found engaged in copying out a "Discourse to the King," which began with "the Son of Man to the King of France." He was brought to trial, and was sentenced to be burned alive. Some of his followers were condemned to whipping and the galleys. The iniquitous judgment passed on Morin was executed on the 14th of March, 1663. At the stake his reason seems to have returned; he repeatedly called on the Saviour and the Virgin, and humbly prayed for mercy to the Creator of all things.

Little commiseration is due to him whose imprisonment is next recorded; his baseness met with deserved punishment. Francis René Crispin du Bec, Marquis of Vardes, was of a good family, and served with reputation in Flanders, France, Italy, and Spain. During the war of the Fronde, he was constant to the royal party; and it was doubtless his zeal and fidelity on this occasion which acquired for him the friendship of Louis XIV. He rose to high rank in the army; was made captain-colonel of the Hundred Swiss in 1655; and next year succeeded the Duke of Orleans in the government of Aigues-Mortes, and was invested with the various orders of knighthood He was on the point of being created a duke and peer,

when the discovery of a dishonourable act of which he had been guilty, stopped his promotion, and deprived him of his liberty. Louis had chosen Vardes as his friend, and had confided to him his passion for the celebrated Mlle. de la Vallière, who was one of the maids of honour to the Duchess of Orleans. It appears that the duchess and her friend, the Countess of Soissons, and their lovers, the Count de Guiche and Vardes, had hoped, by means of La Vallière, to obtain a predominant influence over Louis. But the royal mistress loved Louis with a sincere and disinterested affection, and was not disposed to become the instrument of court intriguers. It was resolved, therefore, to oust her, and substitute in her stead Mlle. de la Mothe Houdancourt, who, it was imagined, would be more subservient. To effect this object, Vardes wrote a letter, purporting to be from the Spanish monarch, to his daughter the French queen, informing her of her consort's connection with La Vallière; it was translated into Spanish by Guiche. The letter, however, fell into the hands of Louis. While endeavouring to discover the author, the king consulted Vardes, and Vardes was so ineffably base as to lead him to believe that the offender was the Duchess of Noailles. The duchess, a woman of strict virtue, had the superintendence of the queen's maids of honour, and had already dissatisfied Louis by her vigilant care of her charge. He therefore readily believed the suggestion of Vardes; and, without farther inquiry, deprived the duchess and her husband of all the places which they held, and ordered them to retire to their estate. For three years the perfidy of Vardes remained a secret, and it would perhaps always have remained so, had he not caused a disclosure of it by conduct which was at once a flagrant breach of confidence to his friend, the Count

de Guiche. and a gross insult to the Duchess of Orleans. He obtained possession of the letters written by the count to the duchess, and refused to give them up; and he incited the Chevalier de Lorraine to make offensive advances to her. This proceeding brought on a quarrel, the result of which was that the king became acquainted with the treachery of the man whom he had trusted. Vardes was sent to the Bastile in December, 1664, from whence he was removed to the citadel of Montpellier, where he was closely confined for eighteen months. He was at length allowed to reside in his government of Aigues-Mortes; but eighteen years passed away before he was recalled to the court. He is said to have employed in study the period of his exile, and to have made himself generally esteemed in Languedoc. When, after his long banishment, he was graciously received by the king, Vardes was dressed in the fashion of his early days, and, when Louis laughed at the antique cut of his coat, the supple courtier replied, "Sire, when one is so wretched as to be banished from you, one is not only unfortunate, but ridiculous!" Vardes did not long enjoy his re-establishment in the royal favour; he died in 1688.

To Vardes succeeds another noble, Count Roger Bussy de Rabutin, who, though he is not accused of such baseness as that of which Vardes was guilty, was by no means a model of delicacy and virtue. He seems, indeed, to have been of opinion, that honour and honesty were not necessary qualities in the persons whom he had about him; for, in his Memoirs, he coolly describes one gentleman who was of his train as having been all his life a cut-purse; and another, on whom he bestows praise for some things, as being addicted to every vice, and no less familiar with robbery and murder than with eating and

drinking. Such being his laxity of principles, it is no wonder that he sometimes participated in disgusting orgies, and was even suspected of feeling a more than parental love for Madame de la Rivière, his daughter. Bussy de Rabutin was born in 1618, entered the army when he was only twelve years of age, served in all the campaigns between 1634 and 1663, and attained the rank of lieutenant-general. His bravery was undoubted, but his vanity, arrogance, and satirical spirit, made him numerous enemies among his brother officers. On one occasion he lampooned Turenne, and that great general, deviating from his usual magnanimity, avenged himself by writing to the king, that "M. de Bussy was the best officer in the army—for songs." In 1641, Bussy was an inmate of the Bastile for five months. The defective discipline of his regiment, and its having engaged in smuggling salt, was the ostensible cause of his imprisonment; he himself assigned as the reason, that his father was hated by Desnoyers the minister. The same faults by which his companions in arms had been converted into foes, proved his ruin at court. He wrote a libellous work, called the "Amorous History of the Gauls," which was published in 1665, and excited a general outcry among the personages whom it describes. Bussy affirms that it was sent to the press without his consent, and even with malignant alterations and additions, by an unfaithful mistress, to whom he entrusted the manuscript. This production was made the pretext for committing him to the Bastile; but it is said that his real offence was a song, in which he ridiculed the king's passion for the Duchess de la Vallière. His imprisonment lasted twenty months, and he candidly owns, in his Memoirs and Letters, that it was not very patiently endured. By dint of importunity, seconded by

an illness with which he was attacked, he at length recovered his liberty. During his captivity, he was compelled to resign, for a much less sum than it cost him, the major-generalship of the light cavalry. But though Bussy was released, he was not pardoned; he was banished to his estate. Notwithstanding his abject supplications, which were incessantly renewed, he remained an exile for sixteen years. At last, in 1682, he was graciously permitted to re-appear at court. His happiness was, however, still incomplete; for the courtiers soon began to cabal against him, and the monarch to treat him coldly; and, though he succeeded in procuring a pension for himself, and pensions and preferments for his children, he failed to obtain the blue riband and a marshal's staff, which were the great objects of his ambition. He died in 1693.

A longer term of imprisonment than was undergone by Bussy Rabutin fell to the lot of the next prisoner. Among the victims of the persecution which was carried on against the Jansenists, was Louis Isaac le Maistre, better known by the name of Saci, which is an anagram formed by him from one of his christian names. He was born in 1613, and was educated at the college of Beauvais, along with his uncle, the celebrated Anthony Arnauld. Though he was early destined to the clerical profession, he did not take orders till he was in his thirty-fifth year; a praise-worthy humility having long induced him to doubt his being competent to fulfil properly the duties of a gospel minister. He was soon after appointed director of the Port Royal nuns, on which occasion he took up his abode in the convent, resigning to it all his property, except a small annuity, and of that he distributed the largest portion to the poor. His time was spent in study, prayer, and pious exercises. But a blameless life was

not sufficient to shield him from theological hatred. In 1661, he was compelled to fly from the convent, and he remained in concealment till 1666, when he was discovered and conveyed to the Bastile. In that prison he was immured for three years and a half, and he solaced his lonely hours by undertaking a translation of the Bible, a considerable part of which he accomplished while he was held in durance. He, however, did not live to complete it. In the autumn of 1669 he was set at liberty. The minister, to whom he was presented on leaving the Bastile, seems to have been willing to grant him some favour, as a compensation for his unmerited sufferings; but all that Saci asked was, that the prisoners might be more leniently treated. After the destruction of Port Royal, he found an asylum in the house of his cousin, the Marquis of Pomponne, and there he ended his days, in 1684. Saci was such an enemy to controversy that, though often attacked, he is said never to have replied except in one instance. Voltaire speaks of him as "one of the good writers of Port Royal." In the poetical compositions of Saci, which were his earliest literary attempts, there are passages that rise above mediocrity. Among his principal works, besides his version of the Bible, are translations of the Psalms, St. Thomas à Kempis, two books of the Eneid, the Fables of Phædrus, and three of the Comedies of Terence.

From the pious and humble pastor we must turn to a very different sort of personage, to one of the courtier species, a man more remarkable for his sudden rise, and for the vicissitudes which he experienced, than for genius or virtue. Three of his eminent contemporaries have left on record their opinion of Antoninus de Caumont, Count, and afterwards, Duke of Lauzun. The witty Bussy

Rabutin pithily describes him as being "one of the least men, in mind as well as body, that God ever created." The more phlegmatic Duke of Berwick says of him, "he had a sort of talent, which, however, consisted only in turning every thing into ridicule, insinuating himself into every body's confidence, worming out their secrets, and playing upon their foibles. He was noble in his carriage, generous, and lived in a splendid style. He loved high play, and played like a gentleman. His figure was very diminutive, and it is incomprehensible how he could ever have become a favourite with the ladies." The satirical St. Simon has drawn, in his best manner, a full-length portrait of Lauzun, which has scarcely a single redeeming feature. He does, indeed, allow, that he was a good friend, "when he chanced to be a friend, which was rarely," and a good relation; that he had noble manners, and was brave to excess. This is the sole speck of light in the picture; the rest is all shade. In the likeness drawn by St. Simon, we see Lauzun, "full of ambition, caprices, and whimsies, jealous of every one, striving always to go beyond the mark, never satisfied, illiterate, unadorned and unattractive in mind, morose, solitary, and unsociable in disposition, mischievous and spiteful by nature, and still more so from ambition and jealousy, prompt to become an enemy, even to those who were not his rivals, cruel in exposing defects, and in finding and making subjects for ridicule, scattering his ill-natured wit about him without sparing any one; and to crown the whole, a courtier equally insolent, scoffing, and base even to servility, and replete with arts, intrigues, and meannesses, to accomplish his designs." Such was the man whom the king long delighted to honour.

Lauzun, who at his outset bore the title of Marquis de Puyguilhem, was the youngest son of a noble Gascon

family, and was introduced at court by the Marshal de Grammont, his relation. He soon became the favourite of Louis, who heaped riches and places upon him; some of the latter were expressly created for him. When the Duke of Mazarin resigned the mastership of the ordnance, the king promised it to Lauzun, but bound him to keep the matter secret for a short time. The folly and vanity of the favourite, who could not refrain from boasting of his good fortune, were the cause of his disappointment. Louvois thus obtained a knowledge of the nomination, and remonstrated against it so strongly, and with such sound reasons, that it was revoked by the monarch. On this occasion a scene took place such as has seldom occurred between monarch and subject. After having vainly tried to persuade the king to carry into effect his original intention, Lauzun burst into a furious passion, turned his back on him, broke his own sword under his foot, and vowed that he would never again serve a prince who had violated his word so shamefully. Louis acted in this instance with true dignity. Opening the window, he threw out his cane, and, as he was quitting the room, he coolly said, "I should be sorry to have struck a man of rank." The next morning, however, Lauzun was conveyed to the Bastile. But Louis was soon induced to forgive the offender, and even to offer him, as an indemnity for his loss, the post of captain of the royal guards. It strongly marks the insolence of Lauzun, that he at first refused the proffered grace, and that entreaties were required to induce him to accept it.

Lauzun had scarcely been twelve months out of the Bastile, before he had an opportunity of becoming the richest subject in Europe. A grand-daughter of Henry IV., the celebrated Duchess of Montpensier, usually known

by the appellation of Mademoiselle, who had reached her forty-second year, fell violently in love with him. In her Memoirs she gives a curious and amusing account of her wooing, for the courtship was all on the side of the lady. So completely had Lauzun recovered his influence, that the king gave his consent to their union. The marriage contract secured to him three duchies and twenty millions of livres. A second time his fortune was marred by his vanity. His friends urged him to hasten the nuptials, but he delayed, that they might be celebrated with royal splendour. Of this delay his enemies availed themselves to work upon the pride of the monarch, and they succeeded in breaking off the match. The duchess was rendered inconsolable by this event; Lauzun seems to have borne it with sufficient philosophy. A secret marriage between them is believed to have subsequently taken place.

Lauzun was supposed to be now more firmly fixed than ever in the king's good graces. He was placed at the head of the army which, in 1670, escorted the king and the court to Flanders, and he displayed extraordinary magnificence in this command. But, flattering as appearances were, he was on the eve of his fall. He had two active and powerful enemies; Louvois, whom he constantly thwarted and provoked in various ways, and Madame de Montespan, the king's mistress, whom he had more than once grossly insulted. Political rivalry and hatred, and female revenge, were finally triumphant. The minister and the mistress so incessantly laboured to blacken Lauzun, whose private marriage with Mademoiselle is said to have aided their efforts, that, in November 1671, he was sent to the Bastile, whence he was soon after removed to the fortress of Pignerol. In that fortress he was closely confined in a cell for nearly five years. His

situation was at length somewhat ameliorated, but his imprisonment was continued for five years more. It is probable that he would have spent the rest of his days at Pignerol, had not the Duchess of Montpensier purchased his freedom, by sacrificing the duchy of Aumale, the earldom of Eu, and the principality of Dombes, to form an appanage for the illegitimate son of Louis by Madame de Montespan. It is an additional stain on the character of Lauzun, that he proved ungrateful to his deliverer.

Though Lauzun was released, he was not suffered to approach the court. Tired of his exile from Versailles, he passed over to England. On the revolution of 1688 breaking out, James placed the queen and the infant prince under his care, to be conveyed to France. This trust opened the way to his re-admission into the royal presence, and to his being created a duke; but he never regained the confidence of the monarch. He led a reinforcement of the French troops to James in Ireland; and displayed, as the Duke of Berwick states, none of the qualities of a general. He died in 1723, at the age of more than ninety. The closing scene of his life was perhaps the only one for which he deserves praise. His disease was cancer in the mouth, the protracted and horrible torture of which he bore with astonishing temper and fortitude.

The severe example which was made of de Bouteville, in the reign of Louis XIII., though it gave a temporary check to the practice of duelling, was far from putting an end to it. Nor did better success attend the ordinances issued in 1634 by Louis XIII., and in 1643, 1651, and 1670, by Louis XIV. The feebleness of the royal authority, during a disturbed regency, and the war of the Fronde, with the quarrels arising out of it, doubtless

tended to neutralise the laws. But, even when Louis XIV. was in uncontested possession of despotic power, we find that the murderous custom of fighting in parties was still existing. In 1663, a famous duel took place between the two La Frettes, Saint Aignan, and Argenlieu, on the one side, and Chalais, Noirmoutier, d'Antin, and Flamarens, on the other. The axe was at length laid to the root of the evil, by the edict of August 1679, which constituted the marshals of France, and the governors of provinces, supreme judges in all cases where individuals supposed their honour to have been wounded. This edict prohibited, under the heaviest penalties, all private combats and rencounters, both within and without the kingdom. One clause seems excellently calculated to produce its intended effect, no less by the insinuation with which it opens, than by the denunciations with which it concludes. "Those," it says, "who, doubting of their own courage, shall have called in the aid of seconds, thirds, or a greater number of persons, shall, besides the punishment of death and confiscation, be degraded from their nobility, and have their coat of arms publicly blackened and broken by the hangman; their successors shall be obliged to adopt new arms; and the seconds, thirds, and other accomplices shall be punished in the same manner." This salutary edict appears to have nearly accomplished the purpose for which it was framed. The slavish fear of incurring the displeasure of the sovereign, a feeling which was so prevalent among the courtiers of Louis XIV., perhaps aided materially in producing obedience to the law. It would have been well if a worse effect had never resulted from that kind of fear.

Among the fashionable gladiators of those days was Philip d'Oger, Marquis of Cavoie, a man whom nature

had liberally endowed with the means of shining in a nobler sphere. Cavoie, born in 1640, and descended from an ancient Picard family, was the son of a woman of talent, who gained the good graces of Anne of Austria, and availed herself of her influence to forward the fortune of her offspring. His personal appearance was greatly in his favour; he was one of the handsomest and best made men in France, and he dressed with singular elegance. His courage, too, was no less conspicuous than his corporeal qualities. In 1666, he served as a volunteer on board of the Dutch fleet, under De Ruyter; and in the battle with the Duke of Albemarle he distinguished himself by the perilous exploit of proceeding in a boat to cut the cable with which some English sloops were towing down a fire-ship on the Dutch admiral. He succeeded in his daring attempt, and escaped unhurt. By this gallant action he acquired the friendship of the celebrated Turenne. Long before this he had become known as "the brave Cavoie," in consequence of his gallant bearing in the single combats which were still too common in France.

It was for having acted as second in one of these combats, that he was immured in the Bastile. His imprisonment would, perhaps, have been protracted, but for a curious circumstance, of which a pleasant account is given by the Duke de St. Simon. Mlle. de Coetlogon, one of the maids of honour to the consort of Louis XIV., had fallen madly in love with Cavoie. St. Simon describes her as being "ugly, prudent, naïve, much liked, and a very good creature." It is no slight proof of her amiability, that, in a frivolous and satirical court, her sorrows were a subject of pity instead of laughter. Cavoie was anything but delighted with her idolatrous fondness, which

she seemed to glory in manifesting; and he strove to rid himself of it by being obdurate, and even downright harsh. In spite of his repulsive conduct, however, she became every day fonder. When he went to the army, her tears and cries were incessant, and during the whole of the campaign she obstinately abstained from adorning her person in the smallest degree. It was not till he came back that she resumed her customary style of dress. His being committed to the Bastile renewed her grief. "She spoke to the king in behalf of Cavoie," says St. Simon, "and not being able to obtain his deliverance, she scolded his majesty so violently as to abuse him. The king laughed heartily, at which she was so much incensed that she threatened him with her nails, and he thought it prudent not to run the risk of them. He every day dined and supped publicly with the queen; at dinner it was usual for the Duchess of Richelieu and the queen's maids of honour to wait upon them. On these occasions, Coetlogon never would hand any thing to the king; either she avoided him, or she flatly refused, and told him that he did not deserve to be waited upon by her. Next she was ill of jaundice, and had violent hysterics, and fits of despair. This went so far, that the king and queen seriously desired the Duchess of Richelieu to accompany her to the Bastile, to see Cavoie; and this was twice or thrice repeated. At last he was released, and Coetlogon, in raptures, again took to dressing; but it was not without much difficulty that she could be reconciled to the king."

It is delightful to know that the devoted love of this warm-hearted female was rewarded; and it is honourable to Louis XIV. that, instead of meanly resenting her bursts of passion, he kindly and successfully exerted

himself to render her happy. In conjunction with the queen, he more than once pleaded for the enamoured lady but he found Cavoie averse from a marriage. At length, the death of his grand maréchal-de-logis enabled the king to attack Cavoie with advantage. This time, however, he spoke in the tone of an absolute monarch; for he insisted that Cavoie should wed Mlle. de Coetlogon; but, in return, he promised to put him in the road to fortune, and, as a dowry to the portionless maid, he gave him the splendid office which had just become vacant. Despotism thus exercised may be forgiven, if only for its rarity. Cavoie yielded to the command of his sovereign, and the desired union took place. The result was more satisfactory than might have been expected. Cavoie proved to be an indulgent husband, and she on her part, never ceased to look up to him as a sort of superior being. Neither in her maiden nor in her married state, was her virtue for a moment doubted.

Cavoie accompanied Louis XIV. in all his campaigns. At the passage of the Rhine, his intrepidity called forth praise from the king himself. A report having soon after been spread, that Cavoie was among the slain, Louis exclaimed, "O, how grieved M. de Turenne will be!" The courtiers who surrounded him were joining in a general chorus of eulogium upon the supposed dead man, when a horseman was seen plunging into the river on the opposite side, and swimming over. It was Cavoie, whom the Prince de Condé had sent to the monarch, to announce to him the complete success of his army.

For many years Cavoie was held in high esteem at court, and enjoyed the confidence of his master. A circumstance at length occurred to disturb his peace. He had hoped to be included in the number of those on whom

the order of the Holy Ghost was conferred in 1688, but he was disappointed. This disappointment was the work of Louvois, who hated him, because he was the old and firm friend of the Marquis de Seignalai. Wounded by this slight, the grand maréchal wrote a letter to Louis, informing him that he intended to retire. But the vows of chagrined courtiers are as brittle as those of lovers. The king called him into his cabinet, and, with that graciousness which he well knew how to assume, he said to him, "We have lived too long together to part now; I cannot let you quit me; I will see that you shall be satisfied." Cavoie abandoned his design of withdrawing from court; but the promised blue riband was never bestowed on him.

At a later period, about twenty years before his decease, he resumed and carried into execution his purpose of seceding from public life. He was a patron of literary characters in general, and was in habits of close intimacy with Racine, Boileau, and other eminent authors. Cavoie died in 1716, at the age of 76, leaving behind him the enviable reputation of having been a man on whose sincerity and probity an implicit reliance might with safety be placed.

From Cavoie we pass to an individual of a less estimable character. Louis, prince of Rohan, commonly known by the title of the Chevalier Rohan, a degenerate descendant from illustrious ancestors, was born about 1635. Rohan was endowed by nature with a handsome and graceful person, and many intellectual qualities; but all these advantages were nullified by his follies and vices. The Marquis de la Fare describes him as being made up of contradictions; sometimes witty, at others the contrary; sometimes dignified and brave, at others mean and

dastardly. In the annals of gallantry he seems to have been ambitious of holding a conspicuous place. The most celebrated of his amorous adventures was his carrying off, aided by her brother, the Duke of Nevers, the beautiful and frail Hortensia Mancini, who was united to the contemptible Duke of Mazarin. That he gamed high, and was careless of his gold, we learn from an anecdote which is related of him. He had lost to the king, at the gaming-table, a large sum, which was to be paid in louis-d'or. Rohan counted out seven or eight hundred, but not having enough of them, he added two hundred Spanish pistoles. Louis objected to the latter, upon which the chevalier snatched them up, and threw them out of the window, saying at the same time, "Since your majesty will not have them, they are good for nothing." The king complained of this to Cardinal Mazarin, who replied, "Sire, the Chevalier de Rohan played like a king, and you played like a chevalier de Rohan." This action of Rohan has been praised as a "piquant lesson" to Louis; it seems, however, to have been rather an absurd mode of rebuking the monarch's unprincely conduct.

Rohan continued in favour at court for several years, and in 1656; was appointed grand huntsman of France, an office equivalent to our master of the buck-hounds: he was afterwards made colonel of the guards. He served in 1654, 1655, 1672, and 1677, and displayed great valour. The commencement of his decline seems to have been his being obliged to give up the office of grand huntsman, in consequence of his amour with the Duchess of Mazarin. His extravagance and profligacy at length ruined his fortune and reputation. To repair his shattered finances, he engaged in a plot at once treasonable and absurd, which completed the destruction of his character,

and brought him to the scaffold. Into this scheme he was seduced by Latruaumont, a Norman officer, a man as impoverished and licentious as himself. Their accomplices were Preault, a young officer, the Marchioness of Villiers-Bourdeville, his mistress, and a schoolmaster, named Van den Enden; all of whom are said to have disbelieved that the soul is immortal. Their plan was, to put into the hands of the Dutch the town of Quillebœuf, in Normandy, and to excite the province to revolt, for which service they were to be liberally rewarded. The magnitude of their project forms a striking contrast with the scantiness of their means. The conspiracy was discovered by the government, before the conspirators could begin their operations. Rohan was committed to the Bastile, and M. de Brissac was sent into Normandy to arrest Latruaumont. The latter defended himself, was mortally wounded, and died in a few hours. He had at least some honourable feelings, for, in order to save his confederates, he persisted to the last moment that he was the sole criminal. The friends of Rohan nightly made the circuit of the Bastile, and vociferated, through a speaking-trumpet, "Latruaumont is dead, and has confessed nothing." They were, however, unheard by the chevalier. He, meanwhile, was perseveringly pressed to acknowledge his guilt, but he refused; and, as his participation in the plot was known only to the deceased, and no written proof existed against him, he might have saved his life, had he not been circumvented by one of those stratagems which were employed against prisoners. De Bezons, one of the counsellors of state who interrogated the captive, had the baseness to assure him that the king meant to pardon him if he would declare the truth, although everything was already known from the dying avowal of Latruaumont. Trusting to the

assurances of his treacherous adviser, Rohan acknowledged his treason. He soon learned the deceit which had been practised on him; and he burst into such violent paroxysms of rage, that his keepers were compelled to manacle him that he might not lay violent hands on himself. Rohan and his accomplices were soon after sentenced to death; they were executed in front of the Bastile, on the 27th of November, 1674. In spite of her erroneous principles, the sufferer most worthy of pity was, perhaps, Madame de Villiers, who displayed a noble fortitude and forgiving spirit. The only evidence against her was some of her letters to Preault, which he had unwisely preserved. At first, she uttered a few words of mild reproof for his fatal imprudence; but she quickly changed her tone, and said with a smile, "We must not think on what is passed, but only how to die."

The same year that consigned Rohan to the scaffold, saw his place in the Bastile filled by a youthful victim, who was doomed to waste a large part of his life in captivity, for having offended a vindictive and powerful religious body. His name is not recorded, but it is evident that he was of a good family.

Louis XIV. was requested, by the Jesuits of Clermont College, to be present at the representation of a tragedy by their pupils. He complied, and was highly gratified by the piece; the more so, perhaps, as it was thickly strewn with passages in praise of him. A nobleman in attendance having spoken to him in terms of admiration, as to the manner in which the drama had been played, the king replied, "Where's the wonder? is it not my college?" These words were not lost upon the principal of the college, who was standing by. As soon as the king was gone, the old inscription, "*Collegium Claromontanum*

Societati Jesus," which was on the front of the building, was taken down, and workmen were all night employed to inscribe the words, "*Collegium Ludovici Magni*," *in* gold letters, on a tablet of black marble.

In the morning the new inscription was seen conspicuously displayed on the edifice. A youth of sixteen, a pupil in the college, had the good sense and the good taste to be disgusted with this worse than indecorous adulation, and he gave vent to his feelings in a Latin distich, which, during the night, he fastened on the gate. The meaning of his lines may be thus given:

> "Christ's name expunged, the king's now fills the stone:
> O impious race! by this is plainly shown
> That Louis is the only god you own!"

The pungent lines excited a violent clamour among the Jesuits, and no pains were spared to trace the writer. The Juvenile offender was discovered, and was shut up in the Bastile. After having been confined there for a long while, he was transferred to the citadel of St. Marguerite, on the coast of Provence. There he continued for several years; after which he was taken back to the Bastile. One-and-thirty years he passed in this manner, and the remainder of his life would doubtless have been consumed in the same way, had he not, in 1705, become sole heir to the estates of his family. The confessor of the Bastile, who was a Jesuit, now remonstrated with his brethren on the impolicy of keeping in prison an individual from whom, by procuring his release, they might reap such a golden harvest. His advice was taken, and the captive was set free at their intercession. There can be no doubt that their tardy and interested mercy received a liberal reward.

Among the fellow-prisoners of the nameless satirist of

the Jesuits was, for a short time, another writer of verses, but verses of a very different kind. The person in question was Charles Dassouci, who ludicrously designated himself as "Emperor of the Burlesque, the first of that name." He was born at Paris, about 1604, and was the son of a barrister. His bringing-up, and his early habits, were not calculated to make him an estimable member of society. His parents were separated, and the tyranny of a female, who was at once the servant and the concubine of his father, drove him from his home. When he was only nine years old, he wandered to Calais, where he passed himself off as an adept in astrology, the son of Cesar, that dealer in magic whose fate has been narrated in the preceding chapter. The boy having, by the power of imagination, worked a cure upon a hypochondriacal individual, the wise people of Calais considered this fact to be a decisive proof of his intercourse with the devil, and were about to throw him into the sea, but he was saved by some of his friends, who conveyed him privately out of the place. After having led a roving life for some time, he became player on the lute and singer to Christina, Duchess of Savoy, the daughter of Henry IV. In 1640, he was introduced to Louis XIII., who gave him the same situation that he had filled in the household of the duchess, and he was continued in it during the minority of Louis XIV. Resolving to return to Turin, he quitted Paris in 1655; but, before his departure from the kingdom, he visited various parts in the south of France. He was accompanied every where by two handsome youths, called his musical pages; his connection with whom afforded to his enemies a reason, or a pretext, for fixing a deep stain on his moral character. Failing to obtain patronage at Turin, he went to Rome; and there he was put into the prison of

the Inquisition, for having satirised some powerful prelates. On being liberated he went back to Paris, where he was not more fortunate than he had been in Italy, for he was committed to the Bastile, in 1675, whence he was transferred to the Châtelet. To his licentious conduct and writings he is said to have been indebted for his imprisonment, which lasted six months. He died about 1679. His principal works are, "Ovid in Good Humour," which is a travestie upon part of the Metamorphoses; Claudian's Rape of Proserpine burlesqued; and many poems in a similar style. Dassouci, who was sometimes called "the ape of Scarron," received a lash from the satirical scourge of Boileau, and he complained heavily of the injury. In his Art of Poetry, Boileau thus alludes to the popularity which Dassouci had once enjoyed:

> "The scurviest joker charmed some kindred mind,
> And even Dassouci could readers find."

It must be owned, however, that in the works of "the Emperor of burlesque," there are some passages which prove that, though his taste and his morals were defective, he was not destitute of talent.

The reader has seen that, with very few exceptions, the prisoners who have been mentioned in this chapter belonged to the courtier-class; that they were men who seemed to feel a difficulty of breathing whenever they did not inhale the vapours of a frivolous and voluptuous court. We ought always to abhor injustice, and therefore we must hate the power which was unjust to them; but they have no title to that liberal share of our pity which is the right of humbler victims, for it was an implied condition of their artificial existence that they should bend to a despot's will; they purchased the smiles of their master, the pleasures, such as they were, of the

Louvre and Versailles, and a portion of the public spoils, by the renunciation of their free agency, and by encountering the risk of being capriciously transferred from a palace to a dungeon. If, relying on his good luck, a man will venture to play with a gambler whom he knows to assert the privilege of now and then cogging the dice, his folly perhaps deserves more compassion than his misfortune.

Let us now see in what manner other classes were affected by the working of an arbitrary government; whether its tyranny was impartially distributed among them. A few examples, taken between the years 1660 and 1670, will enable us to form a tolerably correct judgment upon this subject. Before we proceed to give these examples, it may, however, be well to apprise the reader, that committals to the Bastile were not things of rare occurrence, but the contrary. In 1663, fifty-four persons were sent to that dreary pile; in some years the number was fewer; in others it rose to nearly a hundred and fifty. The Bastile was so crowded in 1665, that a part of the prisoners were obliged to be removed to other places of confinement. It must, indeed, have been full to overflowing, before this removal could have been thought necessary. Such being the case with the Bastile, it is probable that Vincennes, and many other state prisons, were in a similar situation.

Though, as far as can be judged from imperfect registers, it appears that a large majority of the persons incarcerated in the Bastile were the victims of caprice, malice, or religious and political persecution, there can be no doubt that many were really criminal. Some instances of the latter class occur in the years between 1660 and 1670. The crime of coining, which we have seen so common at an earlier period, was still prevalent, and

was still committed by men who held a respectable rank in society. In 1666, twelve coiners were hanged within a fortnight, and they accused several others, among whom was a M. Delcampe, who is described as "the celebrated master of an academy in the suburb of St. Germain." He was escorted in a carriage to the Bastile, by three companies of the guards, and little more than a week elapsed before he was beheaded. The crowd to witness his execution was so great, that many persons were killed or wounded by being pressed or trampled on.

The Bastile was often employed as an engine of extortion. To contribute to the wants of the state, or, rather, to the prodigalities of the court, immense sums were levied upon individuals holding offices, and upon contractors, and all who had any concern with the finances. It must, of course, have been taken for granted that they had robbed the public; and it could hardly have been expected that they would not indemnify themselves, by future peculation, for their present loss. Messat, a registrar of the council, was bastiled for remonstrating against a demand of six hundred thousand livres from himself and three of his colleagues. Catalan, a contractor, shared the same fate, and was threatened with death to boot; but after a confinement of several months, he ransomed himself for six millions of livres. From another individual nine hundred thousand livres, and from three of the treasurers of the exchequer several millions, were squeezed by this powerful instrument. M. Deschiens, one of M. Colbert's head clerks, was also frightened into the payment of a good round sum, by a visit to the Bastile.

Other equally honourable means of raising money were resorted to; all of which helped to fill the prisons as well

as the coffers of the monarch. Among them were "free gifts," once known in England under the name of "benevolences." From the city of Sens, for instance, twelve thousand livres were demanded as a free gift, besides nearly thrice as much for the pay of the gendarmerie. The citizens replied that they had no money, but would give a thousand hogsheads of excellent wine. Whether the wine was accepted, or whether any of the citizens were imprisoned for the misdemeanour of being pennyless, I cannot say.

Immense sums were raised by the sale of offices. For the title of counsellor of the court, 75,000 crowns were paid, and 90,000 for a place at the board of exchequer. Numerous purchasers were found at far higher prices. There is perhaps much truth in Patin's sarcastic remark on this occasion: "They must have robbed at a great rate," says he, "or they would not have so much money to squander." Monopolies likewise lent their aid to replenish the royal store. Niceron, a grocer, who appears to have been an agent, or spokesman, of the Parisian companies of tradesmen, was lodged in the Bastile for having ventured to remonstrate against a projected monopoly of whale-oil. Another article of supply was the stopping of the annuities payable at the town hall; a measure for which we have seen a precedent in the reign of Henry IV. Poignant, a respectable citizen of Paris, was sent to the Bastile for having spoken on this subject; and a female, named Madame de la Trousse, was, for the same cause, prohibited from going to the town hall, or to any other meeting, under pain of corporal punishment! On another occasion, the president le Lievre was banished from Paris, for having made some observations which were unfavourable to the taxes.

The money thus obtained was lavishly spent on the pomps and amusements of the court. A part was dissipated at the gaming-table; Louis being then a constant and an unlucky gamester. Theatrical entertainments absorbed another portion. The getting up of a single grand ballet is said to have cost no less than forty thousand pounds. Guy Patin had reason to exclaim, "they talk much at the Louvre of balls, ballets, and rejoicings, but nothing is said of relieving the people, who are dying of such unexampled want, after so great and solemn a general peace has been concluded. O pudor! ô mores! ô tempora!"

But though, in his private letters, Patin could venture to censure profusion and exaction, he would soon have been fitted with what he somewhere calls "a stone doublet," had he dared to breathe a word against them in public. It was dangerous even for a barrister to perform faithfully his duty to a client. M. Burai, an eminent advocate, was committed to the Bastile, in 1655, for having undertaken the defence of Guenegaut, one of the treasurers, who was prosecuted by the government.

The press was completely muzzled. We find De Prez, a printer, sent to the Bastile, for having printed a letter by the Bishop of Aleth, which displeased the Jesuits; a second unlucky typographer, for offending the Archbishop of Paris; and a third, named Coquier, for privately printing an answer to a work of the Chevalier Talon, who had attacked Coquier's former master, the Superintendent Fouquet. It was a perilous task for a man to defend himself against the minions of favour. The Journal des Sçavans having abused Charles Patin, he was about to reply, when it was intimated to him that if he did not desist, the Bastile would receive him: the

journal happened to be protected by M. Colbert, the minister. Such protection gave a decisive advantage over a less fortunate rival. The conduct of Renaudot, the printer of the Gazette, affords a strong proof of the tyrannical use which was made of it. There appears to have been at this period a sort of partnership, the members of which gained a livelihood by compiling and vending a manuscript gazette. As the sale of this paper diminished that of his own, Renaudot made a bold attempt to get rid of his competitors. He is said to have been extremely desirous that they should be hanged; but his benevolent wish was not gratified. He had, however, the satisfaction of procuring seven of them to be sent to the Bastile, one of whom was publicly whipped through the streets. Yet these measures, harsh as they were, did not succeed in putting down the manuscript gazetteers; for, five years afterwards, six more of them were committed to prison. From its long continuance, and the risks which the traders were willing to encounter, we may infer that the trade was productive.

To have a different opinion from the sovereign, as to the merit of any one whom he placed in office, was a heavy offence. M. de Montespan, expiated, by imprisonment in Fort-l'Evêque, his having doubted the wisdom of choosing M. Montausier as governor to the dauphin. Some were thrown into the Bastile for impossible crimes; such was the case of Saint Severin, a priest who was accused of sorcery. Of others, the fault and the meaning of their punishment are now undiscoverable. With respect to L'Epine, a priest, for example, we are only told that he was discharged from the Bastile, on condition of quitting Paris within twenty-four hours, and going to

Egypt. The reason of this singular species of banishment must remain an enigma.

One of the instances in which despair prompted an inmate of the Bastile to commit suicide, occurred in 1669, and is recorded by Patin. "A state prisoner," says he, "has poisoned himself in the Bastile, terrified by the punishment which could not fail to be inflicted on him, for having spoken very badly *de Domino Priore.*"

CHAPTER VIII.

The Poisoners—The Marchioness of Brinvilliers—Penautier—La Voisin—and her accomplices and dupes—The "Chambre Ardente"—The Countess of Soissons—The Duchess of Bouillon—The Duke of Luxembourg—Stephen de Bray—The Abbé Primi—Andrew Morell—Madame Guyon—Courtils de Sandraz—Constantine de Renneville—The Man with the Iron Mask—Jansenists—Tiron, Veillant, and Lebrun Desmarets—The Count de Bucquoy—The Duke de Richelieu—Miscellaneous Prisoners.

In the year 1676, the Bastile received a criminal, whose guilt was of the blackest dye, and who was soon followed by a crowd of imitators more profoundly wicked, if possible, than she herself was. Poisoning was their crime, and the practice of it became so common that Madame de Sévigné expresses a fear that, in foreign countries, the words Frenchman and poisoner would be considered as synonymous.

Foremost in the dark catalogue stands the Marchioness of Brinvilliers, the daughter of Dreux d'Aubrai, the Civil Lieutenant. She was beautiful, reserved in her manners, and apparently devout; but her heart was corrupted to the core. From her own confession, it appears, that when she was only seven years old, she had already lost her maiden innocence; and had also set fire to a house! Her later years were worthy of this beginning. Between 1666 and 1670, she poisoned her father, two brothers, a sister, and many of her acquaintance. She is said to have administered poison to her husband, though without effect; and also, with fatal success, to the poor and the sick in the hospitals, to whom she gave biscuits, in which deadly

drugs were mixed. The latter facts are denied by Voltaire; they are, however, positively affirmed by Madame de Sévigné.

The diabolical art which she so widely practised was learned from St. Croix, a young officer, who was her paramour. He was a friend of her husband, who, in opposition to her real or feigned remonstrances, made him an inmate of his house. A criminal intimacy soon took place between the wife and the friend. The husband, a man of dissipated habits, seems to have been regardless of their intrigue; but her father was so disgusted by its shameless publicity that he obtained a lettre-de-cachet, and St. Croix was lodged in the Bastile, where he continued for twelve months. There St. Croix was placed in the same apartment with Exili, an Italian, who was confined on suspicion of being, as he really was, a compounder and vender of poisons. Exili taught St. Croix all his detestable secrets, and the latter communicated them to the marchioness, who was a willing scholar.

St. Croix died suddenly in 1672; and, as he had no relatives, the government took possession of his effects. Among them was a small box, which was importunately claimed by the marchioness. It was opened, and found to contain a note, desiring that it might be delivered, without the contents being disturbed, to Madame de Brinvilliers. The box was filled with poisons of all kinds, some of the marchioness's letters to him, and a note of hand to him, for 33,000 livres, bearing her signature.

Disappointed in all attempts to gain possession of the box, and finding that suspicion began to fall heavily upon her, Brinvilliers took flight. After having visited England, she fixed her residence at Liége. Fresh presumptions of her guilt having arisen, it was resolved to arrest her.

Desgrais, the exempt of police, was accordingly despatched to Liége. He disguised himself as an abbé, pretended to be enamoured of her, insinuated himself into her good graces, and ultimately succeeded in seizing the lady and her papers, and conveying them to Paris.

Brinvilliers now disavowed all knowledge of the box; but it was too late. For a little while her spirits deserted her, and she made an ineffectual attempt at suicide. She, however, soon rallied them, and preserved her courage to the last. Among her papers was found a written confession of the numerous crimes which she had committed. To extort an oral confession, it was resolved to put her to the ordinary *question*, which consisted in forcing down the throat of the culprit an immense quantity of water. When she saw three buckets in the torture room, she coolly observed, "This must be for the purpose of drowning me, for they can never expect to make a woman of my size drink it all." She was saved from the trial, by making a full avowal of her misdeeds. Her sentence she heard with an unaltered countenance. In the last twenty-four hours of her existence she is said to have manifested sincere penitence. She was beheaded, and her remains were burned, on the 16th of July, 1676. It will perhaps scarcely be believed that, on the morrow, the besotted populace collected her ashes; assigning as their reason for so doing, that she was a saint!!

With Brinvilliers was implicated Penautier, who held the lucrative offices of treasurer-general of the clergy, and of the states of Languedoc. He was known to be her intimate friend, and was believed, apparently with reason, to be one of her favoured lovers. It is asserted, that in the box which was left by St. Croix, there was a packet of poison, addressed to Penautier. That the receiver-

general had the reputation of making use of such packets is certain, and was a subject of public jest. Cardinal de Bonzi, archbishop of Narbonne, who was his strenuous protector, used to say laughingly, "None of those who have pensions on my benefices are long-lived, for my star is fatal to them all." The caustic Abbé Fouquet one day saw the prelate and Penautier in a carriage together, and he told everybody that he had just met Cardinal de Bonzi and his star. Penautier was imprisoned, and appears to have been in imminent danger; from which he is said to have been extricated only by the most powerful influence, and the sacrifice of half his riches.

Instead of operating as a warning, the execution of the marchioness would rather seem to have stimulated others to the commission of the horrible species of crime for which she suffered. After her death, poisoning is said to have become prevalent to an extraordinary degree. Loud complaints arose from numbers of families, members of which were supposed to have been taken off secretly by their enemies, or by those who were eager to inherit their riches. It was with reference to the latter motive that the name of "powder of succession" was given to the drug administered. We may believe that the complaints were not unfrequently groundless—for it has always been the practice of weak minds to ascribe sudden death to poison—but still, it is certain that there were very many cases in which the suspicion was borne out by facts.

So general did the clamour become that, in January, 1680, the king issued an ordinance, naming commissioners, who were to hold their sittings at the Arsenal, for the purpose of trying poisoners and magicians! This commission is known by the name of *la Chambre Ardente.* It has been supposed, that it derived this appellation from

its being established to take cognizance of crimes which were punishable by fire. This appears to be a mistake; the name having, in old times, been given to the hall in which criminals of high birth were tried, and which was so called because it was hung with black, and lighted with torches. The same title was, however, borne by a sort of committee which Francis II. instituted in each parliament for the trial of Protestants, and which mercilessly condemned them to the flames.

The principal distributor of the poisons, a widow, by the name of Monvoisin, but who was known under the appellation of La Voisin, was already in the Bastile, with about forty persons charged as her accomplices. The most prominent of these subordinate culprits were, a female named La Vigoureux, and her brother, and Cœuvrit, a priest, who was called Lesage. La Voisin was a midwife; but her profession not proving lucrative, she deserted it for the more profitable speculation of turning to account the credulity, the folly, and at last the vices, of mankind. The most innocent part of her employment consisted in telling fortunes on the cards, discovering stolen goods, casting nativities, and selling charms and spells, to render women beautiful and beloved, and men invulnerable and fortunate! Her pretensions to supernatural skill did not stop here; for she boldly undertook to show spirits, and even the devil himself, to her dupes. Such is the gullibility of the crowd, whether of high or low degree, that the number of her visitors, the majority of whom were people of rank, soon enabled her to remove from a mean lodging into a splendid mansion, and keep an equipage and a train of attendants. That her house was made a convenience for the purposes of seduction, and for carrying on illicit connexions, there can be no doubt; many

of those who frequented it, of both sexes, being notorious profligates. The round of La Voisin's occupations was completed by the sale of poisons to those who were desirous of destroying the proof of incontinence, taking vengeance on a rival or an enemy, or getting rid of superannuated husbands and long-lived relatives.

The newly established tribunal found the whole of the prisoners guilty. All but La Voisin were condemned to punishments short of death; to imprisonment, exile, or the galleys. She alone was sentenced to be burned alive on the Place de Grêve, and her ashes scattered to the winds. The narrative of her last hours proves that, to a considerable portion of brutal courage, or rather insensibility, she added the most disgusting sensuality, vulgarity, and impiety. When she was informed of her doom, she invited her guards to have a midnight revel with her, at which she drank largely of wine, and sang twenty bacchanalian songs. The next evening, after having undergone the *question*, she repeated the revel; and when she was told that she had better think on God, and sing hymns, she sang two hymns in a burlesque style. On the morning of her execution, she was enraged at being refused any other food than soup. Before she was placed in the sledge she was advised to confess; but she obstinately refused, and thrust away from her the confessor and the cross. At Nôtre-Dame, it was impossible to make her repeat the amende honorable, and when she reached the Grêve she struggled furiously against the officers, and it was not without using force that they could take her from the vehicle, bind her, and place her on the pile. Consistent to the last, she several times kicked off the straw, poured forth a volley of oaths, and did not

cease her violence till the flames deprived her of the power of motion and speech.

Either with the hope of obtaining impunity, by implicating the great and powerful in her crimes, or, which her character renders more probable, that she might enjoy the malignant delight of involving them in her ruin, La Voisin disclosed the names of many of the noblest personages of the court, who had consulted her; and she stated circumstances which gave rise to terrible suspicions against them. Among those whom she thus dragged into public view, were the Countess of Soissons and the Duchess of Bouillon, nieces of Cardinal Mazarin, the Princess de Tingri, Madame de Polignac, and the Duke of Luxembourg. Against some of the suspected or accused individuals the Chamber issued warrants; others it summoned to appear, and answer interrogatories.

The Countess of Soissons, mother of the celebrated Prince Eugene, was a woman whose reputation was already sullied by the stains of political and amorous intrigue. Among the crimes which were attributed to her, was the death of her husband, who died suddenly in 1673. In her early years, before he became enamoured of her sister Mary, Louis had paid her some attentions. It was probably the remembrance of his transient flame that induced her to send to the countess a message, that if she were innocent he advised her to enter the Bastile, in which case he would befriend her, but that, if she were guilty, she might retire wherever she pleased. She replied that she was blameless, but that she could not endure imprisonment. The countess immediately set off for Brussels, and she never returned to France. It would, however, be doing her injustice to conceal, that she offered to come back and justify herself, on condition that she

should not be confined while the trial was pending. The condition was not granted, and she died in exile, in 1708.

The Duchess of Bouillon, her sister, passed through the ordeal more triumphantly. There is something amusing in the flippant contempt with which she treated her judges. The carriages of nine dukes went in procession with her to the Chambre Ardente, into which she was handed by her husband and the Duke of Vendôme. Before she would take notice of any question that was put to her, she ordered the clerk to minute down, "that she came there solely out of respect to the king's orders, and not at all to the Chamber, which she would not recognise, because she would not derogate from the privilege of the ducal class." She then answered, but with no small disdain, the various questions, some of which were, in truth, ridiculous enough. Her reason for going to La Voisin's house was, she said, that she wished to see the Sibyls, which that female had promised to show her. La Reynie, one of the judges, being absurd enough to ask if she had seen the devil, she replied that she saw him at that moment, that he was very ugly and filthy, and was disguised in the garb of a counsellor of state. As she quitted the court, she said aloud, that she had never before heard so many foolish speeches so gravely uttered. There being nothing more to urge against her than that she had been credulous and sillily curious, no further proceedings were taken by the court; but, angry at her having made laughing-stocks of his magistrates, Louis sent her in exile to Nerac, in the distant province of Guienne.

If in France military talents of the highest order, and important services rendered to the state, had possessed any protecting influence, Francis Henry de Montmorenci, Duke of Luxembourg, would not have been made a prisoner,

and nearly a victim, by an implacable and unprincipled minister. Luxembourg was the posthumous son of that Bouteville whom, in a preceding chapter, we have seen consigned to the scaffold for the crime of duelling. He was warmly patronised by the Princess of Condé, who placed him as aide-de-camp to her son. The young Condé soon became attached to him. At the Battle of Lens, Bouteville distinguished himself so greatly, that though he was not more than twenty, Anne of Austria made him a major-general.

During the war of the Fronde, Bouteville followed the fortunes of Condé; he joined the Spaniards with him, acquired in numerous encounters a well-merited reputation, and finally returned to his allegiance along with his friend. There is an anecdote recorded of him, on the latter occasion, which is much to his honour. After Bouteville had ceased to bear arms against France, the Spanish monarch sent him 60,000 crowns, as a reward for his services. He refused to take the money: "I never," said he, "considered myself in the service of Spain, and will receive favours only from my own sovereign." Soon after this he married the heiress of the house of Luxembourg, by which union he gained a dukedom, and a splendid fortune. If we may believe St. Simon, rank and riches were all that the husband derived from this match, the lady being "frightfully ugly, both in figure and face," and not at all atoning for her personal defects by intellectual qualities. As far as regarded beauty, the pair had no right to reproach each other; for Luxembourg himself had repulsive features, a prominence on his chest, and another behind.

Between 1667 and 1679, Luxembourg, sometimes commander-in-chief, sometimes as second to the great Condé

and the Duke of Orleans, displayed, in Franche Comté, Holland, and Flanders, a degree of skill which gave him a conspicuous place in the first class of generals: in fact, Turenne having fallen, and Condé retired, Luxembourg had no equal in France. The marshal's staff was conferred on him in 1675.

But neither the ancient descent, nor the high rank, nor the still higher renown of Luxembourg, were sufficient to shield him from the malice of his potent enemy. That enemy was Louvois—Louvois, the perpetual inciter of Louis to war, the director of the horrible crimes committed by the French troops in Holland, and the incendiary of the Palatinate. He was, at one time, the friend of Luxembourg, but they quarrelled; and he thenceforth hated him, with even a more deadly hatred than he had cherished against Turenne. The affair of the poisoners seemed to afford him an opportunity, which he eagerly seized, of disgracing, and perhaps destroying the duke.

It was by a credulous belief in the power of pretended sorcerers, that Luxembourg was brought into peril. Bonnard, clerk to one of his lawyers, had lost some papers, which were indispensable to the success of a lawsuit instituted by the duke. To recover them, he applied to Lesage, one of the confederates of La Voisin. Lesage required 2000 crowns, and the performance of certain mummeries by Bonnard; and his demand was granted. The papers were then found to be in the hands of a girl named Dupin, who refused to give them up. A power of attorney was now obtained from the duke, by Bonnard, authorising steps to be taken against Dupin, to compel her to resign the papers. This he gave to Lesage, who, between the body of the document and the signature, inserted two lines, containing a transfer of the duke's soul

to his Satanic majesty. Luckily, the clumsy forger had written these lines in a hand writing quite different from that of the instrument itself. This compact with the devil formed the main proof against Luxembourg. He appears, indeed, to have afforded a further pretext for suspicion, by his weakness in applying to Lesage for the horoscopes of various individuals.

It was on this slender foundation that the plot against him was built. When his name began to be called in question, he is said to have been insidiously counselled by Louvois, to save himself by flight. The brave Cavoie, who was his friend, proved himself to be so, by advising him to surrender himself voluntarily to the Bastile; and this advice was wisely followed by the duke. On his arrival there he was placed in a comfortable chamber, and on the second day, he underwent a preliminary interrogation. But it was not the intention of the minister who had driven him into a prison that he should enjoy any comfort there; and accordingly, on the third day he was removed to one of the filthiest of dungeons, not more than six feet and a half in diameter, and no further notice was taken of him for five weeks. He claimed his privilege, as a peer, of being tried by the Parliament, but no attention was paid to his claim, and he was obliged to be contented with protesting against this denial of justice. It was afterwards made a subject of reproach to him by some of the peers, that he had not stood up with sufficient boldness for the rights of the peerage.

Luxembourg remained for fourteen months in the noisome den into which Louvois had thrown him. The fetid atmosphere which he breathed, the want of exercise, and the disturbed state of his mind, brought on a fit of illness, and so much injured his constitution that he never

thoroughly recovered. It must have been no small aggravation of his sufferings, that he was occasionally drawn forth, to be confronted with the profligate Lesage, and others of the same class, and to hear them impudently charge him with the foulest crimes. Lesage maintained, that the duke had entered into the compact with Satan for the purpose of procuring the death of Dupin; his accomplices added that, by his order they had murdered her, cut the body into quarters, and thrown it into the river. Besides this improbable story, they told another, equally improbable, that he had given poisoned wine to a brother of Dupin; and to a mistress whom that brother kept, and had endeavoured to destroy several persons by means of sorcery. Their depositions may, indeed, contest the palm of absurdity and falsehood with those of Titus Oates and his perjured associates.

This, however, was not all. It would seem, from their evidence, that the duke had driven a hard bargain with the prince of darkness, for they asserted that the compact was designed not only to bring about the murder of Dupin, but also to obtain the government of a province or a fortress, and the marriage of his son with the daughter of Louvois. In a letter to a friend, Luxembourg has left on record his dignified answer to the last of these stupid calumnies. After treating with ridicule the idea that he would sell his soul for a government, he says, with respect to the remainder, "I replied that when the villain (Lesage) told such an untruth, he did not know that I was of a family which did not purchase alliances by crimes; that it would have been a great honour to me had my son married Mdlle. de Louvois, but that I would not have adopted for the purpose any means which would have subjected me to self-reproach; and that when Matthew

de Montmorenci espoused a queen of France, the mother of a minor king, he did not give himself to the devil for this marriage, since the thing was done by a resolution of the States-General, who declared that to gain for the monarch the services of the lords of Montmorenci, it was necessary to form this union. It was even out of delicacy that I used the word *services*, for I believe that, in the declaration, the word *protection* is used."

Such testimony as was produced against Luxembourg was not deemed by his judges sufficient to warrant his conviction, even though a minister of state was eager for his ruin. He was, in consequence, set free on the 14th of May, 1680. Notwithstanding the Duke's acquittal, Louis banished him from the court, and he remained in exile till the summer of 1681, when he was recalled, and resumed his duties as captain of the body-guards. It is somewhat remarkable that Louis never made the slightest allusion to what had passed.

For ten years, Luxembourg remained without a command. In 1690, however, Louis himself placed him at the head of the army in Flanders. Luxembourg had scarcely taken the field, before he gained the splendid victory of Fleurus. The fall of Namur, or of Charleroi, would probably have been the result of this success, had he not been thwarted by the malignant Louvois, who forbade his besieging either of those fortresses, and deprived him of the best part of his army, to reinforce Boufflers. In the succeeding campaigns, Luxembourg pursued his triumphant progress, and won the battles of Lenze, Steenkirk, and Neerwinden. Such a number of standards were taken, and sent to be hung up in the cathedral of Nôtre-Dame, at Paris, that the prince of Conti wittily denominated him "the tapestry-hanger of

Nôtre-Dame." Irritated by his defeats, William III. is said to have exclaimed, "Am I never to beat that hunchback?" "Hunchback!" said the duke, when he was told of this speech, "what does he know about it? He has never seen my back!" The career of Luxembourg was abruptly closed, by an illness of only five days, on the 4th of January, 1695.

Several persons of distinction were censured by the "Chambre Ardente," and were, in consequence, forbidden the court, or sent into exile. Among the latter was Madame de Polignac. The monarch was so decidedly hostile to her, that, five years afterwards, he spoke of her with unmeasured severity, and interfered to prevent the marriage of her son with Mdlle. de Rambures. It was said, that she had once formed the scheme of giving him a philter, to inspire him with a passion for her.

One of the humbler class of culprits who was imprisoned in the Bastile, and who finally suffered the extreme sentence of the law, was Stephen de Bray, described as the accomplice of James Dechaux and Jane Chanfrain, who were perhaps rivals of La Voisin and her confederates in their detestable trade. The crimes alleged against him were blasphemy, sacrilege, and poisoning, and he was burned at the Grève.

From poisoners and mercenary pretenders to sorcery, we turn to an adventurer of a less noxious species. The Abbé Primi was a native of Bologna, in which city his father was a cap-maker. He had acuteness, wit, and a pleasing person, and with these mental and corporeal qualities he hoped to make his way at Paris. On his journey thither he became acquainted with a man of talent, named Duval. One of the travellers in the coach smelt so offensively that the others were anxious to get

rid of him; and accordingly Duval and Primi secretly concerted a scheme for that purpose. Primi was to pretend to the gift of foretelling, from only seeing a person's hand-writing, what had happened and would happen to him. Primi, being qnestioned by Duval on this head, gave him elaborate answers, which the latter admitted to be correct. Specimens of the penmanship of the rest of the travellers, who were in the plot, were then handed to Primi, and of course they were satisfied with the result. The obnoxious passenger at length begged the oracular Italian to do for him the same favour that he had done for the rest. When Primi looked at the paper, he pretended to be shocked, and hastily gave it back, declining to say more than that "he hoped he was mistaken." The applicant, however, solicited so earnestly to know his fate, that Primi told him he was destined to be assassinated at Paris, if he went thither. This startling intelligence produced the designed effect; the strong-scented querist took the first opportunity to discontinue his journey, and return to his home.

When they reached Paris, Duval presented Primi to the Abbé de la Baume, who was afterwards Archbishop of Embrun; and the abbé introduced him to the Duke of Vendôme, and his brother, the Grand Prior. The trick played off in the stage was talked over, and it was agreed that a repetition of it in the French capital would be productive of infinite amusement. Primi was therefore kept carefully secluded, for nearly two months, till he had learned by heart the genealogy and the secret history of most of the persons about the court. When he had obtained a thorough knowledge of their connexions, amours, rivalships, enmities, and presumed motives, his skill in his novel kind of divination was spread about by his

employers, and all the rank and fashion of France soon flocked to consult him. Among the distinguished females who patronized him, were the Countess of Soissons and the Duchess of Orleans; the latter of whom Primi firmly convinced of his powers, by mentioning many circumstances relative to her correspondence with the Count de Guiche. The duchess prevailed on Louis XIV. to let her show his hand-writing to the Italian. To her utter astonishment, Primi no sooner saw it than he declared it to be written by a miserly curmudgeon, who was not possessed of a single good quality. When she returned the paper to Louis, and told him what Primi had said, the king was no less astonished than she was. The paper was indeed written by a man of whom his enemies spoke in the same manner as Primi. It was the hand-writing of Rose, the king's cabinet secretary, who wrote exactly like Louis, and whom he often employed to answer letters, that he might himself avoid trouble. To get at the bottom of this mystery, the king ordered Primi to be brought into his cabinet. "Primi," said the monarch, "I have only two words to say—disclose to me your secret, for which I will pay you with a pension of two thousand livres—or else make up your mind to be hanged." There was no resisting the bribe and the threat, and Primi consequently related his own history, and all that had come to his knowledge since he had lived in the capital. On going into the queen's apartments, Louis mentioned, before the courtiers, that he had admitted Primi to an interview, and he added, "I must acknowledge that he told me things which no being of his kind has ever before revealed to any one." This strong testimony to the merit of Primi contributed not a little to enhance his reputation.

The pension granted to him by Louis placed Primi

above the necessity of resorting to deception for a livelihood; nor, indeed, was the part which he had been playing one which could be carried on for any length of time. He married the daughter of Frederic Leonard, an eminent Parisian printer, and sought to gain reputation by chronicling the actions of the French monarch. In an Italian narrative, which he wrote, of the Dutch campaign of Louis, he divulged the secret of the private treaty between that monarch and our Charles II. For this he was sent to the Bastile; but he was soon released, and received an ample present. The publication is believed to have, in fact, been authorized by the king, to punish the defection of Charles; the imprisonment of the author being merely a blind, to prevent his master from being suspected.

Louvois, who will for ever be infamously remembered for his outrages upon humanity, was the tyrant who twice consigned to the Bastile the celebrated medallist, Andrew Morell. Berne was the native place of Morell, who was born in 1646. He was remarkable for his memory and acuteness. The study of history led him to that of numismatics, in which he made an almost unequalled progress; and he learned drawing, in order to render his medallic knowledge more perfect and available. Charles Patin, the son of Guy, then an exile from France, who was himself no mean numismatist, became acquainted with Morell, and aided him by his counsel and purse. It was probably by his advice that, in 1680, Morell visited Paris, where he met with a warm reception from the most distinguished men of learning and science. Encouraged by them, he undertook the laborious task of publishing a description of all the antique medals which were contained in the numerous cabinets of Europe. As a prelude, he gave a specimen to the world. But his scheme was

interrupted, for the moment, by a circumstance which would ultimately have benefited it, had he not been ungenerously treated. He was appointed coadjutor of Rainssart, the keeper of the king's medals. In assiduously arranging and reducing to order the vast collection which was placed under his care he spent several years. When he claimed his promised reward it was withheld; and, on his venturing to resent this breach of faith, he was committed to the Bastile, in 1688, by Louvois. His friends obtained his release; but, in little more than twelve months, he was again immured in that prison, probably for the same reason as before. Yet, while he was thus persecuted by an arrogant minister, he continued to enjoy the esteem of Louis XIV.; a curious fact, which proves how strong was the influence of Louvois over his master. While he was in the Bastile, his colleague died, and he was offered the vacant place of sole keeper of the king's cabinet, on condition that he would change his religion. Morell, however, rejected the offer.

It was not till 1691, nor till the government of Berne had interfered in his behalf, that Morell was set free. Disgusted with the treatment which he had experienced, he returned to his native country. His subsequent existence was embittered by severe bodily suffering. His health was so much injured by confinement, and by vexation at his favourite project being frustrated, that palsy deprived him of the use of one side, and rendered him incapable of handling pen or pencil. He was somewhat recovered, and had acquired the patronage of the Count of Schwartzenburg-Armstadt, a lover of medals, when he was overturned in a carriage, and one of his shoulders dislocated. This accident brought on another attack of palsy, to which he fell a victim in 1703. The

materials for his unfinished work were arranged and published by Hevercamp, in 1734, with the title of "Thesaurus Morellianus." Another of his works, a "Numismatic History of the Twelve Emperors," was given to the public, in 1753, by Havercamp, Schlegel, and Gori, who overlaid it with a ponderous mass of confused and discordant commentaries.

The doctrines of Quietism, the origin of which may be traced to oriental climes, but of which a Spanish monk, Michael Molinos, was the European apostle, and finally the victim, were espoused by one of the most amiable of French enthusiasts, and they brought on her, as they had brought on him, calumny, persecution, and imprisonment. Madam Guyon, whose maiden name was Bouvier de la Motte, was born at Montargis, in 1648. Even in very early youth she had a strong tendency to mysticism, and would have adopted a monastic life, had her parents not prevented her. At sixteen she was married; at eight-and-twenty she became a widow. The visionary ideas which she had cherished before marriage now resumed their empire, and a powerful stimulus was given to them by her confessor, and by the titular bishop of Geneva, and other ecclesiastics, all of whom laboured to fill her with the belief that Heaven had destined her to play an extraordinary part for the advancement of religion. "Left a widow when she was still tolerably young," says Voltaire, "with riches, beauty, and a mind fitted for society, she became infatuated with what is called *spiritualism*. A monk of Anneci, near Geneva, named Lacombe, was her director. This man, characterised by a not uncommon mixture of passions and religion, and who died mad, plunged the mind of his penitent into the mystic reveries by which it was already affected. The longing desire to

be a French St. Theresa did not allow her to perceive how different the French character is from the Spanish, and made her go much further than St. Theresa. The ambition of having disciples, which is, perhaps, the strongest of all the kinds of ambition, took entire possession of her heart." In ascribing such a motive to Madame Guyon, Voltaire does her wrong, there not being a shadow of a reason for supposing that she was actuated by anything but a sincere though erroneous belief, that she was fulfilling a solemn duty. He is more correct in the description which he gives of her doctrines. "She taught a complete renunciation of self, the silence of the soul, the annihilation of all its faculties, internal worship, and the pure and disinterested love of God, which is neither degraded by fear, nor animated by the hope of reward." It must be owned that, both in language and ideas, she often fell into enormous absurdity, in her efforts to explain and enforce these doctrines.

For five years Madame Guyon wandered through Piedmont, Dauphiny, and the adjacent provinces, spreading her opinions by the press as well as by oral communication. As was to be expected, she made many ardent proselytes, and not a few enemies. In 1686 she returned to Paris, and continued her labours, and was left unmolested for two years. At length she attracted the notice of the archbishop of Paris, who affected to be shocked at the resemblance which her tenets bore to those of Molinos. The see of Paris was at that time filled by Harlay de Chamvallon, an individual infamously celebrated for his profligate debauchery. This prelate, who certainly was not likely to comprehend a pure and disinterested love of God, or of man or woman either, procured Lacombe to be sent to the Bastile as a seducer, and Madame Guyon to

the Visitandines convent. At the Visitandines she was generally beloved, and made several converts. She was soon after snatched from the clutches of Harlay by Madame de Maintenon, who admitted her at St. Cyr, and became much attached to her. It was at St. Cyr that she was also introduced to Fenelon; a friendship took place between them which nothing could ever shake.

But though Fenelon continued true to his friend, Madame de Maintenon ultimately deserted her. This desertion was the work of Godet-Desmarais, bishop of Chartres, who was the religious director of St Cyr and of Madame de Maintenon. The mind of the king was also poisoned against her; and she was exposed to a long series of persecutions, not the least painful of which was a slanderous attack on her character, made in the form of a letter from Lacombe, exhorting her to repent of their criminal intimacy. Lacombe was then insane. So irreproachable, however, was her conduct, that her innocence was universally acknowledged.

In 1695 she was sent to Vincennes, whence she was removed to the Bastile; but she was released through the intervention of Noailles, who had succeeded the shameless Harlay in the archbishopric of Paris. In 1698 she was again immured in the Bastile, and was not liberated till 1702. After her liberation, she was exiled to Blois, where, for fifteen years, her patience, piety, and charity, were admired by every one. She died in 1717, at the age of sixty-nine.

Influenced by prejudice, Voltaire has been unjust to Madame Guyon; he denies that she possessed talent, and sneeringly says, that "she wrote verses like Cotin, and prose like Punchinello." This is not the first time that truth has been sacrificed, for the sake of giving an

epigrammatic turn to a sentence. To the opinion of Voltaire may be opposed that of the shrewd Duke of St. Simon, which is very different. Nor is it probable that Fenelon would have held in high estimation a mere senseless enthusiast. That in her writings, which extend to nine-and-thirty volumes, much erroneous reasoning, mystic jargon, and even nonsense, may be found, admits of no dispute; but they also contain many fine sentiments strikingly expressed. That she was endowed with a prevailing eloquence appears to be undeniable. There is an anecdote recorded of her which proves, likewise, that in the common business of life she was possessed of a large share of penetration and sound sense. She was chosen as sole umpire in a cause in which she and twenty-two of her relations were interested. After thirty days' close investigation of the documents and claims, she drew up an award, which received the prompt and full approbation of all the contending parties. It may be doubted, whether there have been many arbitrators who have given such universal satisfaction as Madame Guyon.

About the time that Madame Guyon was released from the Bastile, that prison became the abode of Gatien de Courtils de Sandraz, a fertile writer, but whose productions are, for the most part, of a class which merits censure rather than praise. This author, a Parisian, born in 1644, must be reckoned among those who poison the sources of history. "He was," says Voltaire, "one of the most culpable writers of this kind. He inundated Europe with fictions under the name of histories." Many of those fictions profess to be written by persons who, during the reigns of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV., had borne a part in affairs of state and court intrigues. More than forty volumes of memoirs of this sort, biographies,

romances, and political tracts, were produced by his indefatigable pen. He was originally a captain in the regiment of Champagne, but went to Holland in 1683, and staid in that country for five years. It was while he was there that he gave some of his earliest works to the press. In 1689, the partiality which he manifested on the side of France occasioned him to be sent out of the Dutch territory, and he went to Paris, where he continued till 1694. He then returned to Holland, where he continued for eight years. In 1702, he went back to his native land, but his reception was calculated to make him regret having done so. He was immediately sent to the Bastile, where he languished for nine years, during the first three of which he was very harshly treated. His offence is not known; but his Annals of Paris and the Court, in which he attacked the character of some powerful personages, are conjectured to have been the cause of his imprisonment. His decease took place in 1712.

Of those who suffered in the Bastile very few indeed revealed to the world the secrets of the prison-house. The first who disclosed them was René Augustus Constantine de Renneville, a Norman gentleman, who was born at Caen, in 1650. De Renneville was the youngest of ten brothers, seven of whom fell in the service of their country. After having borne arms in, and retired from, the mousquetaires, he was patronised by Chamillart, one of the ministers, who employed him in various confidential affairs, and rewarded him by a respectable and lucrative office in Normandy. De Renneville passed several years in his native province, filling up by literary pursuits his intervals of leisure from his official duties. The persecution of the Protestants, of whom he was one, drove

him, in 1699, into Holland. Being, however, unable to find there a satisfactory establishment for his family, he yielded to the solicitations of Chamillart, and returned, in 1702, to France. The minister received him with open arms, gave him a pension, and promised him the first place that might become vacant in his own department. But the scene soon changed. Envy was excited by the reception which he had met with, and it quickly found or made the means of crushing him. Some years before, in a splenetic mood, he had written some *bouts rimés*, which were by no means complimentary to France. As, however, this would hardly authorise a heavy punishment, he was accused of being a spy, and of keeping up a correspondence with foreign powers. In consequence of this he was sent to the Bastile, in May, 1702. He was placed in a wretched chamber, dirty, gloomy, and swarming with fleas, and his bed was overrun with vermin of a more disgusting kind. He was nevertheless tolerably well treated by his jailors till after the escape of Count de Bucquoy, in which he was supposed to have assisted. On this supposition he was thrown into one of the worst dungeons of the fortress, where he remained till life was nearly extinct. He tells us that his only sustenance was bread and water, and that his sleeping place was the bare ground, where, without straw, or even a stone to lay his head on, he lay stretched in the mire, and the slaver of the toads. His situation when he was taken out was pitiable. "My eyes," says he, "were almost out of my head, my nose was as large as a middling-sized cucumber, more than half my teeth, which previously were very good, had fallen out by scurvy, my mouth was swelled, and entirely covered with an eruption, and my bones came through my skin in more than twenty places."

His captivity lasted for some years after his removal from the dungeon, and although he was not again reduced to the same degree of misery, he was treated with much harshness. He bore his misfortune with courage, and solaced his lonely hours by reading and composition. His pen was a small bone, his ink was lampblack mixed with wine, and he wrote between the lines, and on the margins, of books which he had concealed. Under these disadvantages, he composed several works of considerable length. Among these works was a "Treatise on the Duties of a Faithful Christian." They were taken away from him by his persecutors, and he deeply regretted the loss of them. After having been confined for eleven years, he was set at liberty; but was ordered to quit France for ever. It would have been strange had he wished to remain there. De Renneville sought an asylum in England, where George I. gave him a pension; and in 1715 he published his "French Inquisition, or the History of the Bastile," which went through three or four editions, and was translated into various languages. It was probably at the instigation of those who were branded in this book that he was attacked in the street by three cut-throats, whom, however, he bravely repulsed. De Renneville was living in 1724; but the time and place of his decease are not known. Among his works is a Collection of Voyages for the Establishment, &c., of the Dutch East India Company.

The next prisoner comes before us wrapped in such a mysterious cloud, that he scarcely seems to wear the aspect of a being of this world. His birth, his name, his country, his crime, are all unknown; all that we really know of him is, that he was long a captive, and that he died. It cannot be necessary to say, that the problematical indi-

vidual alluded to is the personage who is distinguished by the appellation of "The Man with the Iron Mask."

There appears to have been in France, during the first forty years of the 18th century, a sort of indistinct tradition respecting a masked prisoner, who had been in various state prisons. It was not, however, till 1745 that any attempt was made to lift the veil which covered the subject. In that year came out "Mémoires Secrets pour servir à l'Histoire de Perse," in which French characters were described under oriental names. In these memoirs, which have been ascribed to several writers, among whom is Voltaire, some particulars are given relative to the masked man, and he is asserted to have been the Count de Vermandois, natural son of Louis XIV., confined by his father for having struck the dauphin.

The memoirs gave rise to a Controversy, and to an extravagant romance by the Chevalier de Monhy; but nothing definite was brought forward till 1751, when Voltaire published, under a feigned name, the first edition of his "Age of Louis XIV." Here he threw a ray of light on a part of the question, leaving, however, the rest in as much darkness as ever.

"Some months after the decease of this minister (Mazarin) there happened," says he, "an event which has no parallel, and what is no less singular is, that all the historians have been ignorant of it. There was sent, with the utmost secrecy, to the castle of the Isle of St. Marguerite, on the coast of Provence, an unknown prisoner, above the common stature, young, and of a most handsome and noble figure. During the journey, this prisoner wore a mask, the lower half of which had steel springs, which allowed him to eat while the mask was on his face. Orders were given to kill him if he uncovered himself.

He remained in the isle till a confidential officer, of the name of St. Marc, governor of Pignerol, having been made governor of the Bastile in 1690, went to the Isle of St. Marguerite to fetch him, and conducted him to the Bastile, always masked. The Marquis de Louvois went to see him in that Isle before his removal, and spoke to him standing, and with a deference which bordered on respect. This unknown personage was taken to the Bastile, where he was lodged as comfortably as it was possible to be in that fortress. Nothing that he asked for was refused. His predominant taste was for linen of extreme fineness, and for lace. He played on the guitar. His table was profusely served, and the governor rarely took a seat in his presence. An old physician of the Bastile, who had often attended this singular man when he was ill, said that he had never seen his face, though he had frequently examined his tongue, and the rest of his person. He was admirably made, said this physician; his skin was rather brown; he excited an interest by the mere tone of his voice, but never complained of his situation, nor gave any hint of who he was. This unknown individual died in 1703, and was buried at night in the parish of St. Paul's.

"What renders these circumstances doubly astonishing is, that at the time when he was sent to the Isle of St. Marguerite no eminent personage disappeared in Europe. Yet that the prisoner was one is beyond all doubt, for the following event took place during an early period of his residence in the isle. The governor himself put the dishes on the table, and then withdrew, after having locked him in. The prisoner one day wrote with his knife on a silver plate, and threw the plate out of the window, towards a boat which was near the shore, almost at the foot of the

tower. A fisherman, to whom the boat belonged, picked up the plate, and took it to the governor. Greatly astonished, the latter asked the fisherman, 'Have you read what is written on this plate, or has anybody seen you with it?'—'I cannot read,' replied the fisherman, 'I have only just found it, and nobody has seen it.' This countryman was detained till the governor was thoroughly convinced that he could not read, and that no one had seen the plate. 'You may go now,' said he, 'and think yourself lucky that you know not how to read.' M. de Chamillart, was the last minister who was intrusted with this strange secret. The second Marshal de Fuillade, his son-in-law, told me that, when his father-in-law was on his death-bed, he begged him on his knees to tell him who was the man who was never known by any other name than that of the man with the iron mask. Chamillart replied that it was a state secret, and that he had taken an oath never to reveal it. There are, besides, others of my contemporaries who can testify to my statement, and I know no fact which is more extraordinary or more firmly established."

At a later period, Voltaire, in the "Philosophical Dictionary," corrected some trifling errors which he had made in his account of the masked prisoner. He states that the captive was first confined at Pignerol, whence he was removed to the isle of St. Marguerite, and that, a few days before his death, he said that he believed himself to be about sixty. Voltaire then controverts various guesses which had been hazarded as to the name of the individual, and then adds, that the concealment of his face must have been occasioned by "the fear that a too striking resemblance might be recognised in his features." In

conclusion, he hints, that he is well informed on the subject, but that he will not communicate his knowledge. It would seem, however, that, after a lapse of a few years he changed his mind,—for, in another edition of the Dictionary, there was inserted an article, ostensibly by the editor, but which is generally supposed to be written by Voltaire himself. It is there roundly asserted that the masked captive was an elder brother of Louis XIV., illegitimate, and brought up in secrecy, whom for obvious reasons of state the reigning monarch was obliged to hold in durance. In the original account by Voltaire, his pointed mention of the prisoner's fondness for fine linen and lace, which was also characteristic of Anne of Austria, appears to indicate that he believed her to be the mother of the mysterious individual.

There is in the human mind a restless longing, and perpetual struggle, to penetrate into everything that is shrouded in mystery. Ever since the man with the iron mask was first mentioned, he has been a subject of inquiry and controversy; dissertations and volumes innumerable have been written to dispel the Egyptian darkness which surrounds him. With the exception perhaps of Junius, there is probably no personage who has been the cause of so many books and theories; and in both cases no approach to certainty has been made. It is not improbable that Junius may yet be unveiled; but, with respect to the masked captive, so long a time has gone by, so much care was taken after his decease to destroy all trace of his existence, and it is so likely that the remaining documents, if any there were, perished during the French revolution, that there is not a chance of the world being enabled to say, "*This* is certainly the man."

At least twelve or thirteen candidates have been brought forward for the melancholy honour of being the personage in question. Two of them are English—the Duke of Monmouth and Henry Cromwell. Of the latter it is only necessary to state that he lived a quiet country life after the Restoration, and died in Huntingdonshire in 1679. The Duke of Monmouth is supposed, by M. de St. Foix, to have found some one obliging enough to mount the scaffold in his stead, and to have been sent to France, to be kept in safe custody. This ineffably absurd theory is demolished by the fact, that, when Monmouth was executed, the man with the mask had been for twenty years in prison. Equally baseless is the system of the Chevalier de Taulès, who made a claim for Ardewicks, the patriarch of the Armenians at Constantinople, who was kidnapped, taken to France, and lodged in the Bastile by the Jesuits, to whom he had given offence. But Ardewicks was not carried off till 1699 or 1700, and he is known to have embraced Catholicism, recovered his liberty, and died at Paris. A recent French writer, of very considerable talent and research, has revived the idea that Fouquet was the prisoner, and has supported his argument with great skill; but it is impossible to reconcile his supposition with the story told by Voltaire. With respect to Fouquet, the precautions and deference which Voltaire mentions, would not have been deemed necessary. We have seen that the author of the "Secret Memoirs on Persia" asserts the Count of Vermandois to have been the unknown captive. Voltaire contemptuously denies the truth of this assertion; which is, indeed, sufficiently refuted by the well-ascertained fact, that the count died of small-pox, at the army in Flanders, in 1683, and was buried at Arras; his death was notorious

to numbers of persons. The Duke of Beaufort has been invested with the mask on no better authority. There can be no doubt that he was slain, in a sally, at the siege of Candia, in 1669. But, say those who adopt him as their hero, his body was never found. It certainly was not recognised; and for this plain reason, that the Turks stripped it, and cut off the head. The next asserted owner of the mask is backed by no less than four champions, Dutens, Roux-Fazillac, Delort, and the late Lord Dover, and his cause has been ably supported by them all. The claimant for whom they contend is Matthioli, secretary of the Duke of Mantua, who, for having outwitted Louis in a negotiation respecting the cession of Casal, was seized by order of the monarch, and imprisoned at Pignerol and other places. There are, however, circumstances which seem decisive against his being the man with the iron mask. It will perhaps suffice to mention that, instead of meeting with respect and indulgence, he was treated with the utmost harshness, and even cruelty. It has been argued, as a presumption on his side, that his name bears a resemblance to that of Marchiali, under which the unknown captive was buried. The resemblance, I think, is not a whit closer than that which Fluellin so ingeniously discovers between Macedon and Monmouth, and is a sorry basis on which to build an argument. Another supposition gives the mask to Don John de Gonzaga, a natural brother of the Duke of Mantua, who is imagined to have accompanied Matthioli in disguise to the conference at which he was seized. This supposition is rendered untenable, by irrefragable proof that Matthioli was alone.

We have now arrived at the only remaining name which has been mentioned as that of the mysterious prisoner.

Voltaire, as we have seen, affirms that he was a son of Anne of Austria. This assertion seems to receive support from the language which is said to have been held by Louis XV. Laborde, the head valet-de-chambre of that monarch, who enjoyed much of his confidence, once endeavoured to obtain from him the long-concealed secret. He did not succeed. "I pity him," replied the king, "but his detention was injurious only to himself, and *averted great misfortunes*. Thou must not know the secret." It is manifest that such a speech could not be made with reference to any of the persons who have been enumerated. It is equally manifest that, as Voltaire has intimated, the mask could have been worn for no other purpose than to prevent a striking likeness from being recognised.

Various conjectures have been made as to the paternity of the unknown child, to which Anne of Austria is thought to have given birth. By some the Duke of Buckingham has been assigned as its father, others have attributed it to a French nobleman; some have imagined that it was the fruit of a legitimate union with Cardinal Mazarin, a kind of union which, however, could not take place; and others, with more tenderness for the character of the queen, have represented it to be a twin-brother of Louis XIV. The theory of his royal birth may, perhaps, be as erroneous as all the rest; but it appears to me to be the only one by which we can account for the close and perpetual imprisonment, the pains taken to confine the secret to as few persons as possible, the carefully concealed features, and the respect and indulgence which are asserted to have been uniformly shown to the unfortunate captive.*

* So many accounts have been written of this unfortunate captive, that I have thought the statements taken from documents in the French Archives, ought to be embodied in this volume, being in my mind the most truthful. I have therefore placed them in an Appendix.

We must now turn our attention from the victim of state policy to some of the victims of religious persecution.

To enumerate all whom Jansenism led to the Bastile would be a tedious labour, and no less uninteresting than tedious, as little more than a dry list of names would be the result. Among the Jansenists who towards the close of Louis XIV.'s reign were sent to the Bastile, we find Tiron, a Benedictine, who was prior of Meulan; Germain Veillant, an author; and Lebrun-Desmarets, a man of much theological erudition. Tiron was committed "for different writings, on matters of religion and state, and against the king and the Jesuits." The coupling together of the king and the disciples of Loyola, as though they were co-equal powers, is a striking proof of the vast influence which the Society of Jesus had acquired. Veillant's offence was his being "a violent Jansenist, in connexion with father Quesnel, and having got his works printed, and managed his affairs at Paris." He was examined eighty-nine times, and was probably treated with more than common harshness, for he fell ill on the day that he was released, and died in the course of a few days.

Lebrun-Desmarets, a native of Rouen, who entered the Bastile in 1707, two years previous to the destruction of Port-Royal monastery, was of a family which was strongly attached to that persecuted establishment. His father, a bookseller of Rouen, was condemned to the galleys, for having printed books in vindication of it The son was partly educated in the convent, and never ceased to regard its inmates with affection and reverence. In 1707, when they were involved in a harassing lawsuit by their enemies, Lebrun espoused their cause so ardently that he was imprisoned. He was held in durance for five years, and was treated with great severity. After he

recovered his liberty, he took up his abode at Orleans, where he died, in 1731, at the age of eighty. On Palm Sunday, the day before his death, fearing that a priest would refuse to administer the sacrament to him, he dragged his enfeebled frame to the church, that he might not quit the world without the consolation of having participated in the rites of religion. Lebrun's principal work is a "Liturgical Journey in France," in which he gives an account of the most remarkable customs and ceremonies of the various churches.

We now revert once more to prisoners whose sins were political. Count John Albert de Bucquoy, the next individual who comes under our notice, was of the family of the celebrated Spanish and Imperial general, who bore the same name and title. He was a native of Champagne, in which province he was born about 1650. A line in Dryden's severe description of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, will partly characterize Bucquoy; he

"Was everything by starts, and nothing long."

The circumstances of his having been left an orphan at the age of four years, and having received a very imperfect education, may, perhaps, account for some of his eccentricities. He embraced the military life; but when he had served for five years, an escape from danger, which he considered as miraculous, induced him to make a vow to withdraw from all worldly pursuits. The rules of the Carthusian monks not being strict enough to satisfy him, he entered at La Trappe, where he so much injured his health by supererogatory austerities that the Abbé de Rancé, the superior of the convent, was obliged to dismiss him. Bucquoy then abruptly resumed his warlike attire; but soon after, with equal abruptness, again

cast it off, to dress himself in rags, and become a hermit. Flying from the temptations of Paris, he next settled at Rouen, where, under the name of La Mort, he for two years kept a school, to give gratuitous instruction to the poor. The Jesuits of that city admired his talents and his humble demeanour, and fruitlessly endeavoured to enrol him in their fraternity. Having been accidentally recognised by a person who had been a brother officer, he could no longer preserve his incognito, and he therefore quitted Rouen, and bent his way to Paris. There he formed a plan of founding a new monastic order, destined to prove to unbelievers the truth of the Christian religion. It appears to have been about this time that he assumed the garb and title of an Abbé. But while he was thus planning the demolition of incredulity, he so bewildered himself in his theological speculations and reasonings, that he became a sceptic. One thing which contributed much to produce the change in him was, that, notwithstanding his self-inflicted severities, he had failed to obtain the power of working miracles. This alone would suffice to prove that his intellects were disordered. At this period, his relatives, who had long believed him dead, were made acquainted with his being in existence, and they procured for him a benefice. Bucquoy, however, had got rid of his religious schemes, and had relapsed into a taste for the profession of a soldier. His wish was now to raise a regiment. But while he was indulging this new freak, he attracted the attention of the government by his invectives against despotism and the abuse of power. He was mistaken for the Abbé de la Bourlie, who afterwards became notorious in England under the name of Guiscard, and was arrested. When the mistake was discovered, he would have been

set free, had not his indiscreet language and conduct caused him to be detained. He was committed to Fort-l'Evêque, from whence, however, he contrived to escape. After having been at large for a considerable time, he was caught and shut up in the Bastile, with a strict charge to the keepers that he should be closely watched, as being an enterprising and dangerous person. The officers of that prison were seldom slack in executing such orders, yet in spite of all their vigilance, Bucquoy took his measures so skilfully, and carried them into effect with so much secrecy, that, in May 1709, after having been confined for two years, he left his jailors in the lurch, and made good his retreat to Switzerland. As soon as he was in safety, he began to negotiate with the French ministers for his return to France, and the restoration of his property. Failing in this, he journeyed to Holland, and submitted to the allies a project for converting France into a republic, and annihilating arbitrary power. This scheme, too, fell to the ground. It was, nevertheless, beneficial to him, as it gained for him the friendship of General Schulemburg, who, in 1714, introduced him, at Hanover, to George I. The monarch was pleased with his conversation, admitted him to his table, and gave him a pension. Bucquoy lived to nearly the age of ninety. In his latter days, he wholly neglected his dress, suffered his beard to grow, and might well have been mistaken for a squalid mendicant.

There was perhaps a spice of madness in Bucquoy, which sufficiently accounts for his eccentric conduct. For the faults, or rather crimes, of the personage who now comes under our notice, there was no such excuse. Throughout the whole of his existence, which, like that of Bucquoy, was protracted far beyond the period usually

allotted to man, the Marshal Duke of Richelieu displayed as few virtues, and as many vices, as any courtier on record. He had superficial talents, some wit, polished manners, a handsome person, and much bravery; and this is all that can be said for him. On the other hand, he was wholly without honour, morals, and religion; a supporter and adulator of despotism, a political intriguer, who could stoop to use the basest means for the accomplishment of his purposes, a reckless duellist, and a systematic and heartless seducer; he was, in fact, an impersonation of the profligacy and corruption which distinguished the courts of the regent Duke of Orleans and the fifteenth Louis.

Richelieu, who, in his early years, was known as the Duke of Fronsac, was born in 1696. He was a seven months' child, whom after his birth it was necessary to keep in a box filled with cotton, and the preservation of whose existence was long doubtful. When his health was established, he was put under able preceptors; but he derived little benefit from their instructions, and he never could spell with tolerable correctness. He acquired, however, those showy graces which, undoubtedly, are an ornament to virtue, but which, when the possessor has no virtue, can captivate only persons of frivolous minds. He was introduced to the court at the early age of fourteen, and soon, as St. Simon tells us, became its darling. The female portion of it was in raptures with him, and seems to have expressed its feelings without any regard to decorum. Fronsac, whose passions were uncommonly precocious, met the forward with equal adour, and spared no pains to ensnare the few who were more timid or more modest. He went to such a length that censure began to fall heavily on the Duchess of

Burgundy; and his own father deemed it prudent to request a lettre-de-cachet against him, under which he was for fourteen months confined in the Bastile. During his seclusion, Fronsac was attended by a preceptor; and he consequently came out of prison with some knowledge of Latin, and some addition to his scanty stock of useful information; but, as far as concerned dignity of mind and purity of heart, no improvement whatever had taken place.

The licentious career of Richelieu was suspended for a while, by his serving as a volunteer in the army. He was present at the battle of Denain, and at the sieges of the fortresses which were recovered by Villars in consequence of his victory; and he distinguished himself so much, that he was made aide-de-camp to the marshal, and was chosen by him to convey to Paris the news of the surrender of Friburg. In 1715, he succeeded to the title of Richelieu. On this occasion he performed an action which merits praise; the property which was available for the debts of his father was far from sufficient to cover them, he generously paid to the creditors the full amount of their claims.

Again all the faculties of Richelieu were devoted to licentious pleasures, which were now and then interrupted by a duel. In 1716 he had a desperate encounter with the Count de Gacé, for which the regent committed both parties to the Bastile, where they remained from March till August. This imprisonment was, however, less severe than that which he had to endure two years afterwards. In the spring of 1719, he was sent, for the third time, to the Bastile; but, in this instance, he went with the brand of traitor upon him, and was treated accordingly. He was concerned in the Cellamare conspiracy, and had promised to deliver up

Bayonne to the Spaniards, and to join in exciting the south of France to revolt. "If the Duke of Richelieu had four heads," said the regent, "I have proof enough against him to deprive him of them all." On his first arrival at the Bastile, the duke was placed in a dungeon; but female influence soon obtained his removal to more comfortable quarters, and permission for him to walk daily on the ramparts of the fortress. His walks gave rise to an occurrence, which speaks volumes as to the unblushing depravity of the high-born dames of France. During the hour that he was walking, a string of elegant carriages, filled with women who notoriously were or had been his mistresses, passed slowly backward and forward in front of the spot where he was, and an intercourse of signs was kept up between the prisoner and these unscrupulous ladies. It was by the intercession of two princesses, who were enamoured of him, that his release was obtained, after he had suffered a captivity of five months.

The danger to which Richelieu had been exposed on this occasion, though it did not render him less vicious, rendered him, at least in one respect, more prudent; he did not again put his head in the way of being brought to the block. Thenceforward he limited his political intrigues in France, to acquiring benefits for himself, circumventing his rivals, providing mistresses for the king, and making those mistresses the instruments of his designs; and by these arts he became a thriving courtier. Honours of all kinds, military and civil, were showered upon him. At the age of twenty-four, without any literary pretensions whatever, he was unanimously chosen a member of the French Academy; and, in 1734, he was nominated an honorary member of the Academy of Inscriptions and

Belles Lettres. In the army he rose to the rank of marshal; but his titles as a soldier were not unearned. At Kehl, Philipsburg, Dettingen, Friburg, Fontenoy, Laufeldt, Genoa, and Minorca, they were fairly won. In his last campaign, however, that of Hanover, in 1757, he sullied his laurels by the most infamous conduct. His rapacity and extortion were a scorpion scourge to the country which France had subdued; and, as though he feared that his own endless exactions would not suffice to make him hated, he allowed, if not encouraged, his troops to be guilty of marauding, and of various other enormities. The subsequent defeats of the French army were the righteous result of these dishonourable proceedings. As a negotiator, Richelieu manifested considerable skill. He was twice employed in that capacity; at Vienna, from 1725 to 1729, and at Dresden, in 1746. In both instances he fully accomplished the purpose of his mission, and in both he displayed a degree of ostentatious magnificence which had seldom been equalled. When he entered Vienna, his train consisted of seventy-five carriages; and his horses, and those of his officers, were shod with silver, the shoes being slightly fastened, that they might fall off and be left for the populace. In the state employments which he held, there appears to have been but a solitary instance in which he was entitled to praise. As lieutenant-general of the king in Languedoc, he once deviated into the right path; by a judicious mixture of firmness and mildness, he averted the disturbances which were about to arise from the persecution of the Protestants. But it was not in his nature to be permanently good. At a later period, his harshness, in the same country, was rewarded by his being appointed governor of Guienne and Gascony; and his pride and

tyranny very soon rendered him an object of detestation in both of these provinces. At court, his influence and his example had a baneful effect. He for more than a quarter of a century possessed the friendship of Louis XV., and he foully abused it; he pandered to the monarch's lusts, and strained every nerve, with too much success, to prevent the misguided sovereign from carrying into effect his occasional resolves, to lead in future a life more suitable to his years, and to the lofty station which he filled. He was the Mephistopheles of his royal master.

Richelieu was so fortunate as not to be exposed to the revolutionary tempest; his disgraceful career was brought to a close in August, 1788, when he had attained the age of ninety-two.

Of prisoners less known, or less important, during the period to which this chapter refers, it will suffice to give a scanty specimen. Religious intolerance contributed largely to people the jails. To enumerate all who expiated in dungeons the crime of being Protestants, would be an endless task; in 1686, a hundred and forty-seven persons, and in 1689, sixty-one, were sent to the Bastile alone, almost all of whom were Huguenots. To unite in marriage the members of that proscribed class was a heinous offence; a priest, named John de Pardieu, was doomed to the Bastile for committing it. Whole families were immured for endeavouring to leave the kingdom. Some of the victims were driven to despair by the manner in which they were treated. Such was the case with the Sieur Braconneau, who, as the register specifies, was "imprisoned on account of religion, and died of a wound which he gave to himself with a knife." The Protestants were, however, not the sole sufferers; the Jansenists, too, came in for an ample share of persecution.

Real or pretended plots and evil speaking against the king were another fruitful source of commitments. The following are a few instances: Don Thomas Crisafi "suspected of intrigues with the Spanish ambassador against the interests of the king." Joseph Jurin, a footman, for having said, "Who can prevent me from killing the king?" The Sieur Beranger de Berliere, "for a plot against the King's person." The Count de Morlot, accused of "detestable purposes against the King's life." Desvallons, "for speaking insolently of the King." Laurence Lemierre, shoemaker, and his wife, for dangerous discourse about the King; and Francis Brindjoug for the same offence. The Sieur Cardel, "for important reasons, regarding the safety of the King's person." Jonas de Lamas, a baker, "for execrations against the King." This man was twenty years in the Bastile, and was then removed to the Bicêtre. The Sieur de la Perche, a fencing-master, accused of having said that "the King oppressed his subjects, and thought only of amusing himself with his old woman; that he would soon be a king of beggars; that his officers were starving; that he had ruined the kingdom by driving away the Huguenots; and that he cared not a pin for his people." The last article of the Sieur de la Perche's charge against the sovereign was made in language which is too vulgar to be translated.

Under the head of miscellaneous offences may be mentioned the following: Pierre His, "for having assisted several persons to go clandestinely to America." Those persons were probably Huguenots. The Sieur Marini, envoy from Genoa. This commitment, for which no reason is assigned, took place in 1684, the year in which Louis XIV. made his disgraceful attack on Genoa. Besnoit, called Arnonville, "an evil-minded woman, who held

improper discourse." Charles Combon, called Count de Longueval, "a maker of horoscopes, a fortune-teller, and vender of drugs to procure abortion." The Abbé Dubois, "a wicked and troublesome person." Papillard, "a bad Catholic." Saint Vigor, "affecting to be a hermit, but a man of licentious manners." John Blondeau, a hermit, "a suspected person." Peter John Mere, professing himself a physician, "for selling improper drugs." After having been thirty years in the Bastile, Mere was sent to the Bedlam at Charenton. Bailly, a hatter, "for a design to establish a hat manufactory in a foreign country." Louisa Simon, a widow, "pretends to tell fortunes, to have secrets for inspiring love, and to be able to make marriages." John Galembert, of the gens-d'armes, "a great traveller, suspected of corresponding with the enemies of the state." He was subsequently exiled to Languedoc, his native province, within the limits of which he was ordered to remain. The Prince de Riccia, "one of the party at Naples that is against the French succession." Nicholas Buissen, "for insolent letters against Samuel Bernard (the court banker), with an intention to hurt his credit. The Sieur de Soulange, formerly a captain of infantry in the Orleannois regiment, "a rogue, and spy on both sides."

It will be seen that, in some of those instances, the individuals deserved legal punishment; that, in others, the charges were trivial, or vague, or ridiculous; and that in at least one case the French monarch displayed gross contempt of the law of nations. His imprisonment of Marini, the Genoese envoy, can only be paralleled by the manner in which the Turks used to treat Christian ambassadors on the breaking out of the hostilities. But it was of a piece with the rest of his conduct towards the Genoese

republic. It was retributive justice, that he, the wanton disturber and insulter of Europe, should himself live to have his pride trodden into the dust, and to dread the approach of a hostile army to the walls of his own capital.

CHAPTER IX.

Reign of Louis XV.—Regency of the Duke of Orleans—Oppressive measures against all persons connected with the Finances—Their failure—Prisoners in the Bastile—Freret—Voltaire—The Cellamare conspiracy—The Duchess of Maine—Madame de Staal—Malezieu—Bargeton—Mahudel—The Mississippi scheme—Count de Horn—Death of the Regent—Administration of the Duke of Bourbon—La Blanc—Paris Duverney—The Count de Belleisle—The Chevalier de Belleisle—Madame de Tencin.

When the Duke of Orleans assumed the regency, the finances of the kingdom were in a lamentable state. The protracted and expensive wars into which Louis XIV. had wantonly plunged, the boundless extravagance in which he had indulged, and the peculations, and wasteful expenditure of every kind, which had so long prevailed, had not only drained the treasury, but had also caused a heavy load of debt, and almost dried up the sources of supply. The government was indebted to an enormous amount, the revenue of three years had been anticipated, and public credit was destroyed. From all quarters a loud cry was raised for fiscal reform. A national bankruptcy was proposed in the council, but the proposal was unanimously rejected. The means which were adopted in its stead were, however, scarcely less unjust; they were the same clumsy and violent means which former rulers had almost uniformly employed. Contracts, entered into by the ministers of the late king, were capriciously annulled, annuities and pensions were cut down to one half, offices, which the holders had bought at a great price, were abolished without any com-

pensation being given, a new coinage was issued at a higher nominal value, and government securities, to the amount of six hundred millions, were at one stroke reduced to two hundred and fifty millions, and even of this diminished sum the creditors were defrauded of more than a fifth part. But the grand panacea, for restoring the consumptive exchequer to its pristine vigour, was the establishment of a court, antithetically denominated a chamber of justice. This chamber was directed to institute a rigorous inquiry into the conduct of all persons who had any connection with the finances, or with contracts of any kind, and compel them to disgorge their spoil. A sweeping edict brought under the jurisdiction of this inquisitorial body several thousands of individuals, from the richest farmer-general, or contractor, down to the poorest clerk. "The custom," says Lemontey, "of drawing back by proscriptions the rapines which a vicious administration has tolerated, is an Asiatic art which ill beseems regular governments. But, condemned to a financial anarchy by its squandering habits, France, for a long while, could find no other than this odious remedy." The remedy was indeed an odious one! The retrospective operation of this edict extended as far back as seven-and-twenty years; so that it clutched in its iron grasp not only living presumed criminals, but the children, grand-children, and relations of those who had ceased to exist, and thus at once inflicted torment on a multitude of guiltless victims, and shook property to its very basis. The means employed to give effect to the edict were of the most base and barbarous kind. Death was the penalty denounced against all who were convicted, whoever made an incorrect declaration of his fortune was doomed to the galleys; and, that there might be no lack

of evidence, the pillory was held up *in terrorem* to negligent witnesses. But, bad as all this was, there was something still worse. Informers were to be rewarded with a fifth part of the confiscations, and to receive a certificate stating that they were under the king's protection, and exempt from being sued by their creditors; to slander them was rendered punishable with death. By another enactment, servants were allowed to denounce their masters, under fictitious names; a happy invention for destroying all domestic confidence! To excite the people, already sufficiently excited, a medal was struck, on which the culprits were typified by the robber Cacus, horrible songs and prints were circulated, and it was ordered that a portion of the confiscated property should be distributed among the inhabitants of the place where the condemned individual resided. The whole scheme of proceeding was consistently infamous; it never deviated into anything like justice.

To prevent the escape of those who were marked out for prosecution, an order was suddenly issued forbidding them to leave their abodes on pain of death. Such however, was the terror inspired by this unexpected measure, that many took flight, and others put an end to their own existence. Of those who remained, multitudes were dragged from their homes in the most studiously disgraceful manner, amidst the hootings of the populace, who lent their willing aid to the officers of police. The Bastile and the other prisons were speedily so crowded, that numbers were obliged to be left in their houses under a guard. For six months the chamber proceeded in its career, purveying liberally for the pillory, the galleys, and the scaffold. It was at last discovered, that this was a tedious and unsatisfactory process; that though revenge

and malice were gratified, there was little profit; and the system was in consequence changed. To levy enormous fines and impositions was the new course which was adopted, Twenty lists of pecuniary proscription were made out, containing the names of 4470 heads of families, from whom the sum of two hundred and twenty millions of livres—about nine millions sterling—was demanded. The celebrated Bourvalais, who had risen from being a footman to be one of the richest financiers in France, was taxed at 4,400,000 livres. In many instances envy or personal enmity contrived to have insufferable burthens laid upon obnoxious individuals. Then, on the part of the sufferers, ensued solicitations and bribes to men and women in power, to procure more favourable terms; the golden harvest was eagerly reaped by the courtiers, and the court became a theatre of underhand manœuvres and gross corruption. The people, meanwhile, were rapidly growing disgusted with the chamber of justice. They found that they had derived no benefit whatever from its labours, the sums extorted by it having chiefly been wasted in gifts and pensions to the privileged classes. There was another and yet stronger reason for their dissatisfaction. Trade, and the demand for labour, had fallen off to an alarming degree, and money was rapidly disappearing; for no one would display riches, and indulge in luxuries, when his so doing might render him an object of persecution. So loud a cry was therefore raised against the chamber, that, after having been twelve months in existence, it was suppressed. By the subsequent reversal of most of its sentences, and by a declaration, that no measure of a similar kind should again be resorted to, a severe but just censure was in fact passed upon the defunct tribunal, and upon the whole transaction.

From tyranny in the gross we must turn our attention again to tyranny in the detail. Oriental despotism, in its most capricious mood, could not have inflicted punishment more ridiculously and unjustly than the French government inflicted it upon the celebrated Freret. This eminent individual, who was born at Paris in 1688, was remarkable for his precocious talents and multifarious learning. Chronology, geography, mythology, history, and the laws, customs, and literature of ancient and modern nations, were all thoroughly known to him; he was not ignorant of the abstruse sciences, and his knowledge, instead of being a chaotic mass, was well arranged, systematically linked together, and readily available. An authoritative tone, and some ruggedness of manner, were the only defects imputed to him; but they were merely superficial, and did not prevent him from being kind, charitable, and a sincere and constant friend. He died at the age of sixty-one, his constitution, which was naturally strong, being worn out by incessant study. The edition of his works, in twenty volumes, is incomplete. Several irreligious productions have been calumniously attributed to him.

It was a "Memoir on the Origin of the French" which was the cause of his being sent to the Bastile in 1705, and the Abbé de Vertot is asserted to have been the person to whom he owed his imprisonment. His offence was, that the origin which he assigned to his countrymen was an affront to the national dignity. It is said that, after having been closely interrogated at the Bastile, he begged leave to ask a single question, "Why am I here?" To this the reply was, "You have a great deal of curiosity." When he was at length released, one of the magistrates sneeringly said to him, "Let France, and the French, and modern subjects, alone; antiquity offers such a wide field

for your labours." It is probable that no Turkish cadi, in the fifteenth century, ever uttered a speech of such insolent stupidity as is ascribed, three centuries later, to this magistrate of a polished nation.

Various as were the acquirements of Freret, there was in the Bastile, and nearly contemporaneously with him, a prisoner, who far transcended him on that score, and who possessed a splendid genius. Poet, in almost every style of poetry, dramatist, historian, novelist, essayist, philosopher, controversialist, and commentator, the universal Voltaire was pre-eminent in several departments of literature, and was below mediocrity in none. "He was," says a French author, "one of our greatest poets; the most brilliant, the most elegant, the most fertile, of our prose writers. There is not, in the literature of any country, either in verse or in prose, an author who has written on so many opposite kinds of subjects, and has so constantly displayed a superiority in all of them." It has been said that Voltaire is a superficial writer, but this assertion is not borne out by the fact. On the contrary, it is wonderful that so gay and witty and fertile a writer, who was so much in the whirl of society as he was, should have displayed such profound research, such a vast command of materials, as Voltaire has undoubtedly done.

As a man, Voltaire could be a warm friend, and was a champion of humanity, and a strenuous opponent of intolerance, superstition, and oppression. From our admiration of him a considerable drawback must, however, be made, for the readiness with which he lavished incense upon such worthless nobles as the Duke of Richelieu; for the aristocratical feelings which occasionally peep out even from among his liberal opinions; for his duplicity

in showering praises and professions of kindness upon men whom he was at the same moment devoting to ridicule; for his meanness in stooping to falsehood, whenever he feared that avowing the truth would expose him to inconvenience; for his inflammable passions, which so often blinded his reason; for the sleepless animosity with which he strove to hunt down, disgrace, and crush whoever had offended him; for his obscenity and nauseating indelicacy; and for the fury with which he attacked objects which, in all ages, wise and good men have held sacred.

Voltaire, whose family name was Arouet, was born in 1694, at Chatenay, and received a thorough education at the Jesuits' College, in the French capital. One of his tutors predicted that he would be the Coryphæus of deism in France; and the society which the youthful poet frequented, elegant, but immeasurably licentious and irreligious, was not likely to falsify the prediction. His father destined him for a place in the magistracy, but the literary propensity of the son was unconquerable. In his twenty-second year he was sent to the Bastile, by the regent Duke of Orleans, on an unfounded suspicion of his being the author of a libel. It was while he was in prison that he formed the plan of the Henriade, and completed the tragedy of Œdipus. He was in the Bastile above a year before the regent recognised his innocence and set him free. The regent desired to see him, and the Marquis de Nocé was ordered to introduce him. While they were waiting in the ante-chamber, a circumstance occurred which strongly marks the profaneness and indiscretion of Voltaire. A violent storm burst over Paris, upon which the poet looked up at the clouds, and exclaimed, "If it were a regent that governed above,

things could not be managed worse." When de Nocé presented him to the duke, he said, "Here, your highness, is young Arouet, whom you have just taken out of the Bastile, and whom you will send back again," and he then repeated what had been said. The Duke, however, did not send him back again; he laughed heartily, and made the offender a liberal present. "I thank your royal highness for taking care of my board," said Voltaire, "but I must request that you will not again provide me with lodging."

Œdipus was represented in 1718, with complete success. Two other tragedies, Artemise and Mariane, by which it was succeeded, were less fortunate. The Duke of Orleans was dead, and the reins of government were now held by the Duke of Bourbon. Voltaire having ventured to resent a dastardly insult offered to him by the worthless Chevalier de Rohan-Chabot, the chevalier thought it safer to imprison his adversary than to meet him in the field. His friends applied to the Duke of Bourbon, and raised his anger by showing him an epigram which the poet had composed on him. Their plan was successful; Voltaire was committed to the Bastile, and remained there for six months. This act of injustice induced him to take up his residence in England. In this country he lived for three years, was flatteringly received by many illustrious characters, and obtained a splendid subscription for the Henriade. The produce of this subscription formed the basis of that large fortune which he subsequently obtained by various lucky speculations. In 1728 he returned to his native land, and, between that year and 1749, he produced his tragedies of Zara, Alzira, Mahomet, and Merope, and many other works; was admitted into the French Academy, and was appointed

gentleman in ordinary of the king's bed-chamber, and historiographer of France.

In 1750 Voltaire accepted an invitation to Berlin, which was given to him by the King of Prussia. For a while the sovereign and the poet were on the most amicable terms; but, in 1753, their friendship was broken, and Voltaire quitted the Prussian dominions in disgust. Paris, in consequence of the intrigues of his enemies, being no longer an eligible abode for him, he lived for short periods at Geneva and other places, and at length purchased an estate at Ferney, in the Pays de Gex, on which he finally settled. There, in possession of an ample fortune, and surrounded by friends, he gave free scope to his indefatigable pen. In April, 1778, he went once more to Paris, after an absence of nearly thirty years. He was received with almost a frenzy of enthusiasm, his bust was crowned on the stage, and was placed by the academicians next to that of Corneille. These honours, however, he did not long enjoy, for he expired on the 30th of May: his death is supposed to have been hastened by an overdose of laudanum, which he took to calm the pain occasioned by strangury, and to procure sleep, of which he had long been deprived. In the edition of Beaumarchais the collected works of Voltaire form seventy volumes.

By the detection of the Cellamare conspiracy, in 1718, a large accession of prisoners fell to the share of the Bastile. Wounded female pride had the chief share in getting up that conspiracy. The Duchess of Maine was the prime mover. This princess, whose small frame was animated by a high and restless spirit, had seen her family degraded in a manner which it was not unnatural that she should violently resent. By an edict, dated in 1710, Louis XIV. not only granted to the Duke of Maine, and his other

legitimated children, the same rank and honours which were enjoyed by princes of the blood, but also declared them capable of inheriting the crown, on failure of descendants in the legitimate branches. This step was highly offensive to the French peers, and was opposed by the parliament; but, while the king lived, resistance was unavailing. But the scene was about to change. Though Louis had reinforced his decree by a declaration in 1714, and by a clause in his testament, his death soon afforded another proof of the little respect that is paid to a deceased despot. The will, as every one knows, was set aside, without a voice being heard in support of it. In 1717, at the instance of the Duke of Bourbon and the peers, the council of regency deprived the legitimated princes of all the privileges of princes of the blood, with the exception of a seat in the parliament. It was in vain that the Duchess of Maine and her partisans moved heaven and earth to avert this blow; all their writings, speeches, and manœuvres, were entirely thrown away. It must, however, be owned, that the duchess displayed wonderful talent and industry on this occasion; while the struggle continued, she was constantly to be seen half buried in a pile of dusty volumes, records, and other documents, in which she sought arguments and examples to support her cause. When the dreaded blow was finally struck, her passion rose to the highest pitch. "There is nothing left to me now," exclaimed she to her more patient husband, "but the shame of having married you!" In the following year fresh fuel was heaped upon the flame. The Duke of Maine was reduced to take rank below all the peers, except those who were created posterior to 1694, and was likewise divested of the tutorship of the young king, which was assumed by the Duke of Bourbon. This gave

rise to another outbreak of passion on the part of the duchess, who, on receiving notice to give up to the triumphant Bourbon the official apartments in the Tuileries, broke the glasses, the china, and everything which she had strength enough to destroy. Thus stung to the quick, she resorted to conspiracy for vengeance, and she speedily rallied round her a band of subaltern intriguers and discontented politicians. To expel the Duke of Orleans from the regency, and place the government under the tutelage of Philip V. of Spain, was the design of the plotters. The Spanish monarch, who detested the Duke of Orleans, and who, in spite of his renunciation, had still views on the French crown, was by no means averse from forwarding the scheme of the duchess. The correspondence was carried on through the Prince de Cellamare, the Spanish ambassador at Paris. The Duke of Orleans was, however, not in the dark with respect to these proceedings; they were betrayed to him by some of the parties concerned; and as soon as the proof was complete, the whole of the offenders were arrested. The Duchess of Maine was sent to the castle of Dijon, and allowed only one female servant to attend her, the duke was closely confined in the citadel of Dourlens; the Abbé Brigault, the Marquis of Pompadour, the Count of Laval, the Chevalier Menil, Malezieu, Mademoiselle de Launay, and many more found lodgings in the Bastile; and Vincennes and other prisons received their share of captives. Of De Launay and Malezieu some account shall be given; the rest deserve no record.

The Baroness de Staal, whose maiden name was De Launay, was born at Paris in 1693. Her father was a painter, who was compelled to retire to England before her birth; her mother, who seems not to have been over-

burdened with maternal feelings, found with her infant a retreat in a convent at Rouen. Even in infancy, De Launay manifested the dawning of a very superior intellect, and her manners were so fascinating that she became the darling of the convent. She had an extreme longing for knowledge, her questions were incessant; and, as all the nuns were eager to gratify and improve her, she soon acquired a larger and more valuable stock of ideas than falls to the lot of children in general. Among her friends in the convent was Madame de Grieu, who, on being nominated prioress of St. Louis at Rouen, took the child with her to her new abode. "The convent of St. Louis," says Madame de Staal, "was like a little state in which I reigned sovereignly." The abbess and her sister enjoyed a small pension from their family, which they devoted to the payment of masters for their favourite. By the time that she was fourteen, De Launay had studied the philosophy of Descartes, and pondered over the speculations of Malebranche; and, not long after, she turned her attention to the science of geometry.

Her intellectual powers and her winning qualities brought many admirers around her; among whom were the Abbé de Vertot, M. Brunel, and M. Rey. None of them, however, made any impression on her heart. With respect to the passion of M. Rey, she makes one of those quiet yet piquant remarks, which are so common in her Memoirs. He was accustomed to escort her back to the convent, when she had been visiting some neighbouring friends. "We had to pass through a large open space," says she, "and at the beginning of our acquaintance, he used to take his way along the sides. I found now, that he crossed over the middle of it; from which I concluded,

that his love was at least diminished in the proportion of the difference between the diagonal and the two sides of a square." It was not long ere she ceased to be able to speak of love in a sportive tone. She became deeply enamoured of the Marquis de Silly, the brother of a friend. He respected her, and acted the part of a counsellor, and almost a brother, but he could not return her affection; and the unfortunate fair one has touchingly described the sufferings she endured from her idolatrous and hopeless passion. Years elapsed before it was eradicated.

This woe was aggravated by another. The death of the prioress, Madame de Grieu, in 1710, obliged her to quit the convent, and threw her without resources on the world. She accompanied to Paris the sister of her late patroness, and found a temporary refuge in the Presentation convent. To the purses of her friends she resolutely determined to make no appeal while her means of repayment were uncertain, but rather to welcome servitude than forfeit her self-estimation. Her finances and hopes were almost at the lowest ebb, when the report of her astonishing abilities reached the gay, frivolous, and volatile Duchess of La Ferté. The duchess was delighted with the idea of getting possession of, and exhibiting, what in fashionable cant phrase is called "a lion." She could not rest till the new wonder was brought to her; an event which was somewhat retarded by the necessity under which Mademoiselle de Launay was placed, of borrowing decent clothes to appear in. The duchess was one of those persons who are apt to take sudden and violent likings, and she instantly pronounced her to be an absolute prodigy. She lauded her without measure in all quarters, hurried her about from place to place, and showed her off, much in the same way that a remarkably clever monkey

is managed by an itinerant exhibitor of wild beasts. Madame de Staal has given an account, which is at once ludicrous and painful, of what she endured at this period. Fortunately for her, she became acquainted with men of talent, and acquired some valuable friends, among whom were Fontenelle and Malezieu.

Disappointed in her hopes of being received into the household of the Duchess of La Ferté, or of obtaining an establishment elsewhere through her means, De Launay accepted an offer from the Duchess of Maine, to whom she had been introduced. This defection, as it was deemed, threw her late patroness into a paroxysm of rage. Her new situation was an unenviable one. She filled the place of a lady's maid, who had retired; her apartment was a wretched low closet, in which it was impossible to move about in an upright posture, and which had neither chimney nor window; and her chief occupation was to make up shifts, in which she confesses herself to have been so inexpert that, when the duchess came to put on some of her handywork, she found in the arm what ought to have been in the elbow. By the duchess, and all the upper classes in the house, she was utterly neglected, as a mere drudge; by those of her own class, she was envied, hated, and persecuted, for her natural superiority over them. Life at last became a burthen, and there was a moment when she seriously meditated the commission of suicide.

A happy chance lifted her at once from this slough of despond into her proper sphere. There was an exceedingly beautiful female, named Testard, who laid claim to supernatural powers; by desire of the Duke of Orleans, Fontenelle had visited her, and, prejudiced by her charms, is said to have manifested too much faith in her. The

folly of a philosopher, who was not remarkable for believing too much, excited a loud clamour. "You had better write to M. de Fontenelle, to let him hear what everybody is talking against him about Testard," said the duchess one day to her despised attendant. De Launay did write; and her letter, though brief, was such a finished composition, such an admirable mixture of delicate reproof and delicate praise, that, in the course of a few days, innumerable copies of it were spread throughout Paris. She, meanwhile, was unconscious of the effect which she had produced, till she was apprised of it by the duchess's visitors, who overwhelmed her with compliments and attentions.

From this time Mademoiselle de Launay was looked upon by the duchess as a person whose opinion was of some consequence, and was admitted into her parties, and enjoyed her confidence. She now shared with Malezieu the task of supplying plans and verses for the spectacles at Sceaux. Her literary connections became more widely extended, and she had no lack of lovers. Among those who paid the most devoted homage to her was the Abbé de Chaulieu: the passion, as she herself hints, could have been only platonic, for he was then verging on eighty, but she owns that she had "a despotic authority over everything in his house." It must, however, be mentioned to her honour, that she displayed a rare disinterestedness, and steadily refused presents from him, which would have tempted a woman of a common mind, especially under De Launay's circumstances. The princely gift of a thousand pistoles, which the abbé offered, would have saved her from the slavery, endured night after night, of reading a duchess to sleep, while her own health was endangered by want of rest.

In the memorial which the Duchess of Maine drew up in behalf of the legitimated princes, she was assisted by De Launay. "I turned over," says the latter, "the old chronicles, and the ancient and modern jurisconsults, till excessive fatigue disposed the princess to rest. Then came my reading, to lull her to sleep; and then I went to seek for slumber, which, however, I never found!"

In the proceedings of the duchess, with respect to the Cellamare conspiracy, she was deeply implicated; a part at least of the correspondence passed through her hands. Her good sense anticipated, long before the event, what would be the final result. The storm burst at last. She was arrested on the 19th of December, 1718, and, three days after, was committed to the Bastile. With a truly philosophical spirit she soon became reconciled to her fate. Luckily, she had an invaluable companion in her maid Rondel, faithful, affectionate, and acute, the very model of domestics. But it must not be concealed that she had another consolation, to lighten her prison hours. She inspired two persons with an ardent attachment. One of these was a fellow-prisoner, on the Cellamare score, the Chevalier de Menil; the other was the king's lieutenant in the fortress, M. de Maisonrouge. Reason would have chosen the latter as the proper object of fondness; but her wayward heart decided in favour of the former. No writer has ever imagined a more elevated, devoted, self-sacrificing passion than that of Maisonrouge. He lived and breathed but for her; ever watchful to forerun all her wishes, having no delight but to behold and converse with her, he had even the magnanimity to convey her letters to Menil, and to bring about interviews, when he found that her heart was irrevocably bestowed on him. The catastrophe is painful. The favoured Menil, who

had solemnly pledged himself to make her his wife, was no sooner set free than he proved faithless to his vows. The noble-minded and unfortunate Maisonrouge never recovered the shock which he sustained from his loss; he died the victim of his unrequited love.

The confinement of Mademoiselle de Launay was continued for two years; she was the last to be liberated. Her imprisonment was protracted by her repeated resolute refusals to confess anything that could tend to derogate from the safety and character of the Duchess of Maine. She persisted in this course even after she had the duchess's permission to speak out, and she was released at last after having made only an imperfect confession. This heroic conduct gained, as it deserved, universal praise. It is mortifying to relate that, after her sufferings, she was received by the duchess without that warm greeting which she had a right to expect. The duchess even carried her indifference so far as to let her remain almost in rags, all her clothes having been worn out in the Bastile. Yet she would not hear of her quitting Sceaux, and when Dacier, who was rich, would have married De Launay, she frustrated the negotiation, in the dread of losing her. At length, when her ill-used and exhausted dependant was meditating to retire into a convent, the duchess bestirred herself, and brought about a union with the Baron de Staal, a half-pay Swiss officer. The baroness was now admitted to all honours enjoyed by the highest ladies in the household; and from this period till her decease in 1750, she was comparatively happy.

Nicholas de Malezieu, a native of Paris, was born in 1650. Like Madame de Staal, he possessed much talent, and, like her, he displayed it in childhood. By the time

that he was four years old he had, with scarcely any assistance, taught himself to read and write, and at twelve years of age had gone through a complete course of philosophy. His merit gained for him the friendship of Bossuet, and the Duke of Montausier, and so highly did those eminent men rate it, that they recommended him as tutor to the Duke of Maine. Fenelon was subsequently added to the list of his friends, and, notwithstanding the breach between that amiable prelate and Bossuet, he retained the good-will of both. He seems, too, to have lived in harmony with all the principal contemporary authors. The marriage of the Duke of Maine with the high-sprited and intelligent grand-daughter of the great Condé drew still closer the ties which bound Malezieu to the family of the duke. His learning embraced a wide circle, he was a proficient in mathematics, elegant literature, Greek and Hebrew, and his extemporary translations from the Greek dramatists and poets, and his illustrations and comments on them, are said to have been delivered with a degree of eloquence which excited universal admiration. The duchess listened to his instructions with delight. It is therefore not wonderful, that he acquired an almost unbounded influence in the ducal palace. "The decisions of M. Malezieu," says Madame de Staal, "were thought as infallible as were those of Pythagoras among his disciples. The warmest disputes were at an end the moment any one pronounced the words, '*He* said it.'" There was another reason which had, perhaps, no small effect in rendering him a favourite with the duchess. He was not one of those stately personages who think that it derogates from their dignity to attend to graceful trifles. The duchess was fond of giving magnificent spectacles and entertain

ments, and having plays acted at Sceaux, where she held a sort of miniature court. Malezieu had the management of them, and when verses, and sometimes pieces, were wanted, his ready pen was called in to supply them. From these light occupations he was taken away for a time, to become mathematical preceptor to the youthful Duke of Burgundy; in this task he was for four years engaged, and he performed it in a manner which enhanced his reputation. The lessons which he gave to his royal pupil were afterwards published, under the title of "Elements of Geometry." The days of Malezieu were spent in uninterrupted tranquillity, till the period when the duchess rashly plunged into intrigues with the Spanish court. It was not unnatural that he should espouse warmly the cause of his noble patrons, and he was perhaps led to the verge of treason before he was aware. His heaviest offence seems to have been his writing, at the request of the Duchess of Maine, sketches of two letters against the Duke of Orleans which were to be sent to the Spanish monarch, for the purpose of being addressed by him to Louis XV. and the parliaments. Malezieu long persisted in denying the fact, and asserting the innocence of his employer, and for this persistency he was kept in the Bastile after the whole of the plotters, with the exception of himself and De Launay, had been discharged. It was not till he knew that proof was in the hands of the government, and the duchess had confessed, that he avowed the authorship of the letters. He was then released, but was exiled for six months to Etampes. His decease took place in 1727.

There remains yet another person who suffered by the Cellamare conspiracy, though he was not one of its agents. He had the fate of the unlucky stork in the

fable, who got into dangerous company. Bargeton, one of the most celebrated advocates of the parliament of Paris, was born, about 1675, at Uzès, in Languedoc. If he was not of humble birth, his parents at least were poor; for, before he had emerged from obscurity, all relationship with him was disclaimed by a Languedocian family which claimed to be noble. When, however, his fortune and fame were established, one of that family was anxious to prove his consanguinity with the formerly despised advocate, and hoped to flatter him, by descanting on the antiquity of their common origin. Bargeton cut short the harangue of his would-be kinsman. "As you are a gentleman by birth," said he, "it is impossible that we can be relations."

Bargeton was the law adviser of some of the highest personages of the kingdom. The Duke and Duchess of Maine placed entire confidence in him. This circumstance gave rise to suspicion that he was connected with the Cellamare plot, and he was consequently committed to the Bastile. In a short time his innocence was recognised, and he was set at liberty.

The legal reputation of Bargeton, both as a civilian and common lawyer, induced Machault, the comptroller-general of finances, to apply to him, in 1749, for assistance. The clergy had hitherto contributed to the wants of the state only by voluntary gifts; and, of course, asserted the privilege of not being compelled to contribute at all. Machault determined to put an end to this pretended privilege, by subjecting them, like the rest of the people, to the payment of the twentieth. Had he succeeded, his success would have put an end to one of the abuses which contributed to produce the Revolution, and, most probably would at length have caused the downfall of another

equally crying abuse with respect to the nobles. Though Bargeton was thoroughly convinced that the clergy had no right to an exemption from imposts, yet, being aware that the firmness of Louis XV. was not to be relied on, he advised Machault either to prohibit the ecclesiastics from holding meetings, or to decline a contest with them. "I have the king's promise to stand by me," said Machault. "He will break it," replied the advocate, who, in this instance, proved to be a prophet. Bargeton, nevertheless, lent his aid to the comptroller-general, and wrote a series of admirable letters on the subject of the clerical immunity. His labour was in vain. Unchangeable in nothing but sensuality and despotism, the king yielded; the clergy triumphed; and the letters of Bargeton were suppressed by an order of council. The author did not live to witness this event; he died early in 1753, before his work had passed through the press.

The suspicion of carrying on an improper correspondence with Spain, though it does not appear that he was connected with the Duchess of Maine's party, gave another prisoner to the Bastile. Nicholas Mahudel, who was born at Langres, in 1673, was by profession a physician; but his celebrity was acquired by his profound knowledge of history and numismatics. So extensive were his talents and information upon those subjects, that he was chosen a member of the Academy of Inscriptions, and he took a very active part in the proceedings of that learned body. His servant having betrayed to the police some letters which his master had written to Spain, at the period when all intercourse with that country was looked upon with a jealous eye, the consequence was, that Mahudel was lodged in the Bastile for several months. It was while he was in prison that he wrote his "History of

Medallions," of which only four copies were printed. His other productions are chiefly dissertations on medals, and on historical questions. He died in 1747.

It has seldom happened that a captive has been reluctant to quit his prison. Such an uncommon anomaly, did, however, actually occur with respect to an individual who was implicated in the Cellamare plot. Five years had elapsed since the discomfiture of that plot, and the government believed that all who were connected with it had been released, when it was by mere chance discovered that one of them, the Marquis de Bon Repos, had been left in the Bastile by mistake. Bon Repos, an aged officer, who, notwithstanding his title, was miserably poor, was anything but grateful for his proffered release. He had become habituated to confinement, and was rejoiced to be safe from want, and he manifested a strong dislike to "a crust of bread and liberty." It was not without much murmuring that he consented to change his quarters in the Bastile for others in the Hôtel des Invalides.

It might have been supposed that the tremendous explosion of the Mississippi scheme, which spread ruin over France, would have filled the prisons with real or imagined offenders. But this was not the case. Law himself, more unfortunate and imprudent perhaps than criminal, received a passport from the regent, and reached Brussels in safety. The only persons who appear to have at all suffered, were his brother, William Law, and two of the directors, who were sent for a short time to the Bastile.

The next remarkable inmate of the Bastile, the Count de Horn, a Flemish noble, was no less infamous by crime than he was illustrious by birth. He was allied to several princely houses, and could even claim relationship with

the regent Duke of Orleans. So thoroughly had he disgraced himself, by his fraudulent and debauched conduct, that at the very time when he was meditating the atrocity which drew on him the vengeance of the law, his family had despatched a gentleman to pay his debts, to request his expulsion from Paris, and to bring him back, by force if necessary, to his own country. Their agent arrived too late. Some of the count's freaks, disgraceful as they were, might have been charitably ascribed to the licentious manners of the age, and the turbulent passions of a youth of twenty-two, had he not been guilty of a crime which proved that his heart was still more faulty than his head.

The two indiscretions—if so mild a name may be given to them—for which the Count de Horn was sent to the Bastile, were not too harshly punished by his imprisonment; as they manifested a degree of brutality which was ominous of worse deeds. In company with some of his libertine companions, he was passing the cloisters of St. Germain, where a corpse was waiting for interment. "What are you doing here? Get up!" he exclaimed to the body, which was lying uncovered. He seconded his speech by striking the corpse several blows with his sword, and overturning it among the sacred vessels, which were placed in readiness for the funeral service.

As no notice was taken of this outrage, he was emboldened to make the church of St. Germain once more the scene of his exploits. It is necessary to mention that, at the period in question, almost the whole population of Paris was labouring under the epidemic madness of the famous Mississippi scheme. An ordinance relative to bank notes had just been issued by the government, and a hawker was crying it for sale in the street. From this

man the count purchased a copy of the ordinance, and gave him a crown for it, on condition of his placing a large stone at the great door of the church. On this stone De Horn mounted, and while high mass was being celebrated within the building, he thundered out the anthem which is sung when the dead are committed to the ground, and he concluded by proclaiming the burial of bank notes. This second insult to public decency was too much to be borne; the priest laid his complaint before the government, and the offender was conveyed to the Bastile.

In the course of a few days the youthful profligate was set at liberty. But his brief imprisonment had worked no beneficial change upon him. It seems, indeed, to have had a contrary effect. So slight a chastisement perhaps induced him to calculate upon impunity for greater crimes. A very short time elapsed before he dipped his hands in blood. In the sanguinary deed which brought him to destruction, he had two accomplices, Laurent de Mille, a half-pay captain, and Lestang, a youth of twenty, the son of a Flemish banker. Every Frenchman, who could any how obtain the means of speculating, was then busily engaged in the Rue Quincampoix, which was the Parisian stock exchange. De Horn, too, was there; but his speculation was of a more diabolical nature than that which engaged the multitude. Having picked out a rich stock-jobber, who was known to carry about with him a large sum in notes, he lured him by pretending to be in possession of shares, which he was willing to sell considerably under the market price. These bargains were usually concluded in a tavern; and, accordingly, De Horn and his associates proceeded with their unsuspecting victim to a house of that kind in the Rue de Venise. There he stabbed the unfortunate stock-jobber, and robbed him of his pocket-

book. He then, with his accomplices, leaped out of the window, and endeavoured to make his escape. Lestang got off, but the count and the half-pay captain were less fortunate; they were overtaken, and lodged in prison.

Justice, on this occasion, was not delayed. The trial of the delinquents followed close upon the commission of the murder; no circumstance of mitigation could be pleaded in their behalf, and they were both condemned to be broken on the wheel. No sooner did the sentence become known than the whole of the aristocratical class in France, Flanders, and Germany was in commotion. To subject a nobleman to such a degrading punishment was declared to be an unprecedented and abominable measure. The regent was beset on all sides by solicitations for a pardon, or, at least, for a change in the mode of executing the criminal. When the first of these boons was found to be hopeless, redoubled exertions were made to obtain the second. Among the arguments employed to move the regent, that of the culprit being related to him was strongly urged. But, though Philip of Orleans was stained by many vices, there were moments when his better nature prevailed, and he was capable of acting nobly. To the near relations of the court, who pressed him incessantly on the subject, he replied, "When I have impure blood in my veins, I have it drawn out." Then, quoting the sentiments of Corneille, "'tis crime that brands with shame, and not the scaffold," he added, "I must share in the disgrace of which you complain, and this ought to console the rest of his kindred." It is said, however, that he was at length on the point of yielding so far as to commute the form of punishment for one less obnoxious: but that Mr. Law and the Abbé Dubois insisted on the absolute necessity of allowing justice to take

its course. Popular indignation would, they justly remarked, be roused by any favour being shown to the perpetrator of such a heinous offence. The regent acquiesced in their opinion; and, that he might not be harassed by further appeals to his clemency, he went privately to St. Cloud, where he remained till the murderers were executed.

Having lost all hope from the regent, the Princes of Robecq and Isengheim, who were nearly allied to De Horn, tried a new method of evading the dreaded stigma. They gained admission to his prison, and exhorted him to escape the wheel by taking poison, which they offered. But either religious scruples, or a lingering belief that he might yet be pardoned, induced him to decline acceding to their wishes. Finding that all their entreaties and remonstrances were unavailing, they quitted him in a rage, exclaiming, "Go, wretch! you are fit only to die by the hand of the executioner."

The firmness of the regent was worthy of applause. It was, nevertheless, looked upon as an inexpiable insult by the aristocracy in general; and especially by the kinsfolk of the malefactor. The regent having directed that the confiscated property of the count should be restored to the prince, his brother, the haughty noble rejected the proffered boon, and gave vent to his high displeasure in the following insolent letter. "I do not complain, Sir, of the death of my brother; he had committed so horrible a crime that there was no punishment he did not deserve. But I complain that, in his person, you have violated the rights of the kingdom, of the nobility, and of nations. For the offer of his confiscated property, which you have been pleased to make, I thank you; but I should think myself as infamous as he was,

if I were to accept of the slightest favour from your Royal Highness. I hope that God and the king will, some day, mete out to you the same rigid justice that you have dispensed to my unfortunate brother."

By the death of the Duke of Orleans, in 1723, all the power of the state fell into the worthless hands of the Duke of Bourbon. The vices of Orleans had been at least palliated by great talents, some virtues, and a heart which, though corrupted, was not dead to kind and noble feelings; but Bourbon, harsh in disposition, rude in manners, repulsive in personal appearance, and governed by an artful and profligate mistress, had no one good quality to throw even a faint lustre over his numerous defects. The sway of Bourbon lasted little more than two years, and, in that brief space of time, he committed so many enormous political errors, springing from ignorance, presumption, and intolerance, that the kingdom was thrown into discontent and confusion.

The minister of the war department, Claude le Blanc, was one of those who suffered by the change which took place on the death of the Duke of Orleans. Le Blanc was born in 1669, and had filled several important offices before he became one of the ministers. The machinations of his enemies, one of the most inveterate of whom was the Marshal de Villeroi, procured his temporary banishment from court in 1723, on suspicion of his having participated in peculation committed by the treasurer. He was confined in the Bastile by the Duke of Bourbon, and the parliament was directed to bring him to trial. To secure his conviction, his adversaries calumniously asserted, that he had employed an assassin to murder one of his principal accusers. The parliament, however, fully acquitted him of all the charges which were brought

against him. He, was, nevertheless, exiled by the duke. In 1726, Cardinal de Fleury placed him once more at the head of the war department, where he continued till his decease, in 1728. It is in favour of his character that he died poor, and that he was beloved by the people.

Le Blanc was scarcely restored to his office, before his vacant place in the Bastile was filled by one who had been among the most active of his enemies. Joseph Paris Duverney, a native of Dauphiné, of humble birth, was one of four brothers, all of whom were men of talent. A fortunate chance gave them the opportunity of exercising their talents in a wider field than, considering their primitive station in life, they could have hoped to find. They were the sons of a man who kept a small solitary inn at the foot of the Alps, and whom they assisted in his business. The Duke of Vendôme was then at the head of the French army in Italy, and all his plans were rendered abortive by the failure of supplies. This want of subsistence was caused by the scandalous conduct of Bouchu, the commissary general. Bouchu, who was old, had the folly to make love to a young girl, and she had the good sense to prefer his deputy, who had youth and personal appearance on his side. To revenge himself for this slight, Bouchu retarded the collecting of provisions, in order to throw the blame on his deputy, who was charged with the merely mechanical part of the operations. Knowing that further delay would be ruin to him, the deputy contrived to collect a portion of the supplies that were wanted; but he was yet far from being out of his difficulties, for the Alps were interposed between him and the French army, and he knew not where to find in the neighbourhood a practicable pass. While he was labouring under this embarrassment, he luckily fell in with the four

brothers, and they engaged to extricate him from it. They were thoroughly acquainted with every path and goat track in that wild region, and they conducted the convoy with so much skill, through apparently impassable ways, that they reached the French camp without having suffered the slightest loss.

This service, for which they were liberally rewarded, laid the foundation of their fortune. The contractors and commissaries employed them, and promoted them rapidly; and, at no distant time, the brothers became themselves contractors, and extensive commercial speculators. Riches rapidly flowed in upon them, and they were called to take a share in managing the finances of the state. They experienced, however, a temporary eclipse during the ascendancy of Law, to whom they were hostile, and who avenged himself by procuring their exile into Dauphiné. The flight of Law put an end to their banishment; they returned to Paris, were in higher credit than ever, and contributed much to mitigate the evils which had been caused by the Mississippi scheme. They continued to have great weight in the government, till they lost it in consequence of a political intrigue, in which Joseph Paris imprudently engaged, with the Marchioness de Prie, the Duke of Bourbon's mistress. Their intent was to exclude Cardinal de Fleury from public affairs, and to give the duke an unbounded ascendancy over the youthful monarch. Fleury discovered the plot; the duke was deprived of power; and the brothers were once more exiled. Joseph was soon after arrested, at his asylum near Langres, and was sent to the Bastile, where he remained for nearly two years. In 1730, however, he recovered his influence, and he kept it till his death in 1770. France is indebted to Joseph Duverney for the

project of the Royal Military School, which was carried into execution in 1751.

Two grandsons of the unfortunate Fouquet, the Count de Belleisle, and the Chevalier de Belleisle, were involved in the fall of Le Blanc, and were for some time inmates of the Bastile. The count was born in 1684; the chevalier in 1693. The count had acquired a high military character, in the war of the succession, and in the Spanish campaign of 1719, when, with his brother, he was immured in a prison. After his release, he served with distinction in various quarters, and rose to the rank of marshal. Cardinal de Fleury placed entire confidence in his civil as well as his military talents. It was not, however, till the breaking out of the war of 1741 that his genius shone forth in its full lustre. The secret negotiations for raising the elector of Bavaria to the dignity of emperor were carried on by him, and on this occasion he gave convincing proof of his diplomatic skill. Placed at the head of the French army, which was to maintain Charles VII. on the throne, Belleisle carried Prague by assault. But while, as ambassador extraordinary to Louis XV., he was securing the election of Charles at Frankfort, the Austrians threatened to deprive him of his recent conquests. He therefore hastened back to his army, obtained some advantages, and would probably have triumphed, had not the sudden defection of Prussia and Saxony left him to bear the whole weight of Maria Theresa's forces.

Prague, garrisoned by 28,000 French, was soon invested by 60,000 enemies. Belleisle offered to give up the Bohemian capital, on condition of being allowed to retire without molestation; but the besiegers would listen to nothing short of a surrender at discretion. After

having made a protracted defence, he began to be threatened by famine, and, in this extremity, he resolved to break through the Austrian quarters. At the head of 15,000 men, with twelve days' provisions, he sallied from Prague on the night of the 16th of December, 1742, and directed his march upon Egra, which city was at the distance of thirty-eight leagues. He took his measures so well, that, though he was closely pursued by the enemy's light troops, he sustained little injury. The sufferings of the French army were, nevertheless, extreme. Compelled to bivouac for ten nights among snow and ice, and often without wood for fires, the mortality among the troops was appalling. The line of the retreat was marked throughout by whole platoons frozen to death: seventeen hundred men perished in the course of the ten days. In 1746 and 1747, Belleisle was charged with the defence of Dauphiné: these were his last campaigns. In 1748 he was created a duke and peer, and in 1757 he became war minister. He held the war department for three years, and reformed many abuses. In 1761 he died childless, the last of his family—his heir, the Count of Gisors, having fallen at the battle of Crevelt.

His brother, the chevalier, had gone before him, the victim of an intemperate courage. From 1734 to 1746, the chevalier was often actively engaged, both in fighting and negotiating, and displayed equal talents in each occupation. It being an object of importance to open a passage into the heart of Piedmont, the two brothers agreed that an attack should be made on the formidable intrenched post of the Piedmontese, at the Col de l'Assiette. The chevalier was animated by the prospect of gaining the rank of marshal, in case of success. The position of the enemy was all but inaccessible, and was fortified with

more than usual care, well provided with artillery, and held by a large force. Belleisle led his men to the attack, but found it impossible even to approach his antagonists, who scattered death among his ranks, with almost perfec impunity to themselves. Instead of retiring from a hopeless contest, he madly persisted in his efforts, till the slaughter became horrible. He at last put himself at the head of a body of officers, and made a desperate but fruitless assault, in which he fell, along with most of those who surrounded him. Nearly four thousand of the assailants were slain, and half as many wounded, while the loss of the Piedmontese fell far short of a hundred men.

We have, in the former part of this chapter, seen one literary female an inmate of the Bastile; we must now contemplate in the same situation another, of equal talents, but with a more sullied character. The second of these females was Madame de Tencin, sister of the cardinal of that name. Though, like most Frenchwomen of that period, it is probable that Madame de Staal did not preserve an inviolate chastity, she certainly paid more respect to appearances than was paid by Madame de Tencin, and was less stimulated by mere animal passion. "I shall paint only my bust," Madame de Staal is said to have replied, when she was asked how, in her Memoirs, she would contrive to speak of her love affairs; with respect to Madame de Tencin, it may be doubted whether, at least while she was moving in the circle of the court, she would have hesitated to delineate a whole-length likeness of herself.

Tencin was a name derived from a small estate; the family name was Guerin. The lady in question was born in 1681, and her father was president of the parliament of Grenoble. She was placed in the convent of Montfleury,

near Grenoble, where she resided for five years. If credit may be given to the statements of St. Simon and others, her conduct while she wore the veil was anything but pious and decorous. The consequence of one of her amours is said to have rendered it indispensable for her to leave the convent, of which she was already tired. Her great object was to shine in Paris, and this she accomplished. Through the assistance of Fontenelle, who took a great interest in her, she obtained a dispensation from the Pope, and she then gave full swing to her pleasures. She became the mistress of the ultra profligate Dubois; and the scandalous chronicles of the time charge her with having joined in the orgies of the regent and his companions, and prostituted her talents by the composition of obscene works. With Law, the Mississippi projector, she was intimate, and she and her brother appear to have profited largely by speculations during that period of national madness. It is one pleasing feature in her character, that she was more anxious to establish her brother than herself.

The celebrated d'Alembert was the fruit of one of her amours; the father was the Chevalier Destouches. The infant was, in the first instance, deserted by its parents; it was left on the steps of the church of St. John de la Ronde, where it was found in such a state of weakness that, instead of sending it to the Foundling Hospital, the commissary of police humanely gave it to the wife of a poor glazier to be nursed. Such a want of maternal feeling, had it not been in some measure atoned for, would have justified a sarcasm of the Abbé Trublet, who on some one praising to him the mild disposition of Madame de Tencin, replied, "Oh, yes! if she had an interest in poisoning you, she would choose the mildest poison for

the purpose." The parents are, however, said to have relented in the course of a few days; the father settled on him a pension of 1200 livres.

It was the fatal result of another of her amours that gave her a place in the Bastile. In 1726, La Fresnaye, one of the members of the Great Council, shot himself through the head at her house. A paper in his handwriting was found, in which he declared that, if ever he died a violent death, she would be the cause of it. From this paper, which certainly bears on the face of it a very different meaning, it was hastily and harshly concluded, that she had a hand in his murder. She was consequently committed to the Conciergerie, whence she was removed to the Bastile; but she was not long a prisoner.

In her later years, the conduct of Madame de Tencin underwent a complete reformation; the catastrophe of La Fresnaye perhaps contributed to the change. She kept up a correspondence with Cardinal Lambertini, which was not discontinued when he became Pope Benedict XIV., and her house was the resort of all the wit and talent of Paris, with Fontenelle and Montesquieu at their head. Her assemblage of literary men she used jocosely to call her menagerie, and her animals, and it was her custom, on New-year's-day, to present each individual with two ells of velvet, for a pair of breeches. It is not easy to suppress a smile at the ludicrous idea of such a present. Madame de Tencin died in 1749. Her three romances, the Count de Comminge, the Siege of Calais, and the Misfortunes of Love, still deservedly maintain a high rank among works of that class. It has been said, that she was assisted in writing them by two of her nephews; but the truth of this is at least doubtful.

CHAPTER X.

Reign of Louis XV. continued—The Bull Unigenitus—A Notary Public—G. N. Nivelle—G. C. Buffard—Death of Deacon Paris—Rise, progress, and acts, of the Convulsionaries—Persecutions of them, and artifices employed by them to foil their persecutors—Lenglet Dufresnoy—La Beaumelle—F. de Marsy—Marmontel—the Abbé Morellet—Mirabeau the elder—The Chevalier Resseguier—Groubendal and Dulaurens—Robbé de Beauveset—Mahé de la Bourdonnais—Count Lally—La Chalotais—Marin—Durosoi—Prévost de Beaumont—Barletti St. Paul—Dumouriez.

Religious intolerance on the one hand, and disgusting fanaticism on the other, contributed largely to swell the number of captives in the Bastile, and in other places of confinement. For many years after Pope Clement XI., at the instigation of the bigoted Le Tellier and Louis XIV., had thrown among the clergy of the Gallican church that ecclesiastical firebrand the bull Unigenitus, it continued to spread the flames of fierce contention, hatred, and persecution. The first individual for whom the bull found an abode in a prison was, I believe, a notary public. While the regency was held by the Duke of Orleans, the bishops of Mirepoix, Senez, Montpellier, and Boulogne, had the boldness to sign an act, protesting against the bull, and appealing from the pope to a future council; and, accompanied by a notary, they solemnly presented this act to the assembled Sorbonne. As to have imprisoned the four bishops would scarcely have been politic, they were only ordered to retire to their dioceses; the notary, of whom a scape-goat could more conveniently be made, was sent to the Bastile.

Backed by power, the supporters of the bull were finally triumphant, and they did not fail to make the vanquished party experience the consequence of being defeated by men who did not consider forbearance as a virtue. It would be useless to dwell upon the many appellants who were chastised for having ventured to doubt the pontifical infallibility, and insist on referring the question in dispute to a future council; I will, therefore, only make mention of two individuals.

Among those who were most active in opposing the bull Unigenitus, and who, consequently, were proscribed by its champions, was Gabriel Nicholas Nivelle; he was indefatigable in drawing up memorials and tracts, and soliciting appeals against it. He more than once contrived to elude his pursuers; but, in 1730, he was taken and committed to the Bastile, where he remained for four months. His zeal was, however, rather excited than cooled by this imprisonment; and, till his decease in 1761, when he was in his seventy-fourth year, he continued to be a determined opponent of the bull. Nivelle edited several voluminous works relative to the contest in which his party was engaged; the principal of which, in four folio volumes, bears the title of The Constitution Unigenitus denounced to the Universal Church, or a General Collection of the Acts of Appeal.

Equally hostile to the bull, and equally persecuted by its victorious friends, was Gabriel Charles Buffard, a native of Bayeux, who was born in 1683. He was rector of the university of Caen, and canon of Bayeux; but was expelled from his offices, and banished out of the diocese, in 1722. Buffard settled at Paris, where he was not long allowed to remain in quiet. He was conveyed to the Bastile, and, after having been there for some time,

he was called to Auxerre. From Auxerre he was speedily dragged to suffer another imprisonment in the Bastile. Fortunately, he found a protector in Cardinal des Gesvres, through whose intercession he was set at liberty. Buffard thenceforth lived in retirement, and gained a subsistence by giving opinions as a chamber counsel, and by assisting young scholars in the study of the canon law. He died in 1763.

It was an opinion of Bishop Butler, the celebrated author of The Analogy of Religion, that "whole communities and public bodies might be seized with fits of insanity, as well as individuals;" and, indeed, that "nothing but this principle, that they are liable to insanity, equally at least with private persons, can account for the major part of those transactions which we read of in history." Singular as, at first sight, this opinion may appear to be, there are many circumstances which ought to induce us to pause, before we reject it as erroneous. The strange scenes, for instance, which took place among the Jansenists,—scenes arising out of the death of the deacon Paris,—may almost authorise a belief that large bodies of individuals can be simultaneously smitten with monomania, or at least can communicate it to each other with wonderful rapidity.

Francis Paris, a strenuous opponent of the bull Unigenitus, was the son of a French counsellor. Pious, humble, and benevolent, Paris relinquished to his brother all claim to the paternal succession, renounced the world, lived by the labour of his own hands, and spent his leisure moments in prayer, and in succouring, consoling, and instructing the poor. His modest estimate of his own abilities deterred him from taking holy orders. He died on the 1st of May, 1727, and was buried in the church-

yard of St. Medard. Many of those to whom he had been a comforter and guide, looked upon him as a beatified being, and came to pray at his tomb. Among the number were many females. Rumours soon began to be spread, that miracles were worked by the influence of the sainted defunct; sight was said to be restored, and contracted limbs extended to their full longitude. Multitudes now flocked to the sacred ground. Then ensued, especially among the women, contortions and convulsive movements, attended by cries, shrieks, and groans, all of which were regarded as manifestations of divine power. All convulsive movements are catching, and consequently, the number of persons who displayed them at St. Medard, increased daily to an enormous extent. The jargon which was uttered by the convulsionaries, during their paroxysms, was next supposed to be the language of prophecy; and a whole volume of it was actually published, under the title of "A Collection of Interesting Predictions." Before, however, we laugh at our Gallic neighbours for such folly, it may be well to remember some things which have happened in England, within the last quarter of a century.

After these practices had gone on, with hourly increasing vigour, for some years, the government closed the church-yard of St. Medard, which was become the theatre of exhibitions calculated to mislead the weak-minded, and disgust men of sound intellect. But the sect of the convulsionaries (for it had by this time grown into a strong and regularly organised sect) was not discouraged by this measure. Earth from the church-yard where the deacon Paris was interred, and water from the spring which had supplied him with drink, became the symbols of this buried idol, and the means of working miracles. Meetings were held in private houses, and

there fanaticism of the darkest, wildest kind, gave full scope to all its gloomy inspirations. A regular system of torture was practised by the deluded votaries; women being the principal sufferers. To be beaten with logs on the tenderest portion of the human frame; to bend the body into a semicircular form, and allow a weight of fifty pounds to be dropped from the ceiling on to the abdomen; to lie with a plank on the same part, while several men stood on it; to be tied up with the head downwards, and to have the breasts and nipples torn with pincers, were among the inflictions to which females submitted, and apparently with delight. The blows were inflicted by vigorous young men, who were called Secouristes. The highly sublimed madness of some pushed them to still more dreadful extremities: it prompted them to be tied on spits, and exposed to the flames, or to be nailed by the hands and feet to a cross. The performance of these unnatural acts was denominated "the work."

The Convulsionaries did not form a homogeneous body; as was to be expected, they were split into parties, bearing various appellations and being, in some instances hostile to each other. They were the Vaillantistes, the Augustinians, the Melangistes, the Margoullistes, the Figuristes, and many more. The Vaillantistes took their name from Peter Vaillant, a priest, who taught that the prophet Elijah was resuscitated, and that he would appear on earth, to convert the Jews and the court of Rome. His disciple, Housset, maintained that Vaillant himself was the prophet. Darnaud, another priest, boldly assumed the character of the prophet Enoch. The Augustinians, who carried their fanaticism to such a pitch that they were looked upon as heretical by other convulsionary sects, were the followers of a friar of the name of Augus-

tin. Among their peculiar follies, was that of making nocturnal processions, with torches in their hands, and halters round their necks, to Nôtre Dame, and thence to the Place de Grève; these processions were a sort of rehearsal of the tragic scene in which they expected they should ultimately be called upon to perform. The Melangistes were those who distinguished two causes producing convulsions; one which gave rise to useless or improper acts, another which inspired divine and supernatural acts. The tenets of the Margoullistes have not been handed down to us. The Figuristes were so called from their representing, in their convulsive paroxysms, various phases of the passion of Christ, and the martyrdom of the saints.

The fierce enthusiasm of all these sectarians has never been exceeded. Like American Indians, they set at defiance the utmost severity of pain. Even slight stimulus would rouse them into violent action. "I have seen them," says Voltaire, "when they were talking of the miracles of St. Paris, grow heated by degrees, till their whole frame trembled, their faces were disfigured by rage, and they would have killed whoever dared to contradict them. Yes, I have seen them writhe their limbs, and foam, and cry out 'there must be blood!'" Not the slightest concession would they make to avoid punishment. A pardon was offered to several of them, who were sentenced to the pillory; they refused it, for they could not, they said, repent of having done right. No lapse of time could eradicate this feeling from their minds. In 1775, when M. de Malesherbes visited the Conciergerie, he found there a male and a female convulsionary, who had been imprisoned for forty-one years. Age had not chilled in them the resentment which was excited

by their wrongs. He offered them liberty, if they would only ask for it; but they firmly replied, that they had been unjustly detained, and that it was the business of justice to atone for its errors, and to give the reparation to which they were entitled. They were released.

It must not be imagined that the sect of the Convulsionaries consisted merely of poor and ignorant people. Such was not the case. Strange as the fact may appear, the sect included great numbers of pious, learned, and intellectual men. Very many rich individuals also belonged to it, and contributed to the maintenance of their less fortunate brethren. A Count Daverne was sent to the Bastile "for wasting his property in supporting the Convulsionaries;" and the same crime brought a similar penalty on other individuals. That there were, however, numerous impostors, who pretended to espouse the doctrines of the sect in order to further their own purposes, admits of no doubt. There were men who gave regular lessons in the art of bringing on convulsions.

A hot persecution was perseveringly carried on against this sect, and with the usual result; the sect throve in spite of it, or rather, perhaps, in consequence of it. For five-and-thirty years it mocked all attempts to exterminate it, and it did not begin to decline till it was left to the withering influence of ridicule and neglect. It is believed to have retained a few votaries even to a recent period. The Bastile and the other Parisian prisons were yearly crowded with convulsionaries. Of those who were confined in the Bastile, one of the earliest was Peter Vaillant, from whom the Vaillantistes derived their name. He had previously suffered there an imprisonment of three years, for his opposition to the bull Unigenitus. In 1734, he was again sent thither; and, after having

been there for two-and-twenty years, he was transferred to Vincennes, where he died. Housset, his disciple; Darnaud, who called himself the prophet Enoch; the abbé Blondel, author of Lives of the Saints; the abbés Deffart, Planchon, and Deribat; Lequeux, prior of St. Yves, the learned editor of Bossuet's works; and Carré de Montgeron, a counsellor of the parliament of Paris; were of the number of those who were sent to the Bastile. Montgeron was born in the French capital, in 1686, and we have his own word for it that, till he was suddenly converted in St. Médard's churchyard, he was a thoroughly worthless unbeliever. By a natural transition, he became one of the most credulous and enthusiastic of dupes. In 1737, he printed a quarto volume, illustrated with twenty plates, "to demonstrate the truth of the miracles operated by the intercession of the beatified Paris." This volume he presented to Louis XV. at Versailles, and the next day, by order of the monarch, he was conveyed to the Bastile. He was afterwards an inmate of various prisons, and died at last in the citadel of Valence. While he was in confinement, he added two more volumes to his rhapsody.

In hunting down the humbler class of delinquents, the police found abundant employment, and they performed their task in the most oppressive manner. Hénault, the lieutenant of police, an irascible and unreasoning man, was an ardent partisan of the Jesuits, and, of course, was a violent enemy of the proscribed sect. His myrmidons spread terror in all directions. They are charged with having, "even in the dead of night, penetrated into the dwellings of individuals, scaled the walls, broken open the doors, and shown no respect to age or sex, when their object was to discover, imprison, consign to the pillory, banish, and ruin, those who favoured the convulsionaries."

It was dangerous to be subject to epileptic or other fits; persons who were attacked by them in the streets having been pitilessly hurried off to gaol.

The vigilance of the police was also kept on the stretch, and in a majority of cases was eluded, by the prints, posting-bills, pamphlets, and periodical writings of the convulsionaries, as well as by their secret meetings. Of the prints, one represented the tree of religion, in the branches of which were seated Quesnel, Paris, and other apostles of Jansenism, while two Jesuits were striving to root it up. For this, a rhymer and engraver, Cointre by name, was committed to the Bastile. In another, Archbishop Vintimille was seen throwing a stone at the sainted deacon Paris, and the lieutenant of police was holding the archiepiscopal cross, and stimulating the prelate. This print procured for Mercier, the vender of it, a place in the Bastile. In a third of these caricatures was depicted the pope larded with a dozen Jesuits.

In placarding the walls, and distributing hand-bills, all sorts of stratagems were employed. The following is one of the most ingenious modes which was adopted by the bill-stickers. A woman, raggedly dressed, with a large pannier strapped on her back, leaned her pannier against the wall, as though she wished to rest herself. In the pannier was a child, who, as soon as she stopped, opened the cover, and fixed a bill on the wall. As soon as his task was performed he closed the aperture, and his bearer proceeded with him to another convenient place. The bills and short pamphlets, which were made public in this and other ways, were innumerable. In the library of the Duke de la Vallière, there was an imperfect collection of them, which formed thirteen quarto volumes. Most of them seem to have been printed in the environs of the

capital; they were often brought into the city by females, and in searching for them, the police officers were guilty of the grossest indecency.

But the great object which the police sought to obtain, and in which it was utterly foiled, was the suppression of a periodical publication which bore the title of Nouvelles Ecclesiastiques. This obnoxious work was vigorously continued for more than twenty years, without the government being able to lay hands on the writers, or to stop the printing and distributing of it. Many persons were, indeed, committed to the Bastile and other prisons, on suspicion of being its editors or contributors, but no positive proof could ever be procured. The police were wholly at fault; and the authors of the paper appear to have taken a provoking pleasure in showing the lieutenant of police their contempt of his efforts. In one instance, while his satellites were fruitlessly searching a house which was suspected of being a printing-office, a bundle of the papers, wet from the press, was thrown into his carriage, almost before his face. The paper was sometimes printed in the city, and sometimes in the neighbourhood. At one time the press was secreted even under the dome of the Luxembourg; at another, it was hidden among piles of timber, and the printers were disguised as sawyers; on other occasions, it was contained in a boat on the Seine. When the paper was printed in the vicinity of Paris, various artifices were resorted to for smuggling it into the town, one of which deserves especial notice. Water-dogs were trained as carriers; they were closely shorn, the papers were wrapped round them, a large rough skin was then sewn carefully over the whole, and the sagacious animals then took their way, unsuspected, to their several destinations.

But enough has been said on the victims of religious delusion; and we must now turn our view to persons of a different class. The fertile author of little short of thirty works, and the editor of an equal number, nearly all of which are forgotten, Lenglet Dufresnoy, who was born at Beauvais in 1764, was perhaps a more frequent visitor to the Bastile than any other person. It is said that he was so accustomed to lettres-de-cachet, that as soon as he saw M. Tapin, the officer, enter his apartment, he would greet him with, "Ah, M. Tapin, good day to you;" and then say to his servant, "Come, be quick; make up my little bundle, and put in my linen and my snuff;" which being done, he would add, "Now, M. Tapin, I am at your service." Between 1718 and 1751, he was at least five times in the Bastile. He was also acquainted with Vincennes and other gaols. His first committal to the Parisian state prison was perhaps the one which was most dishonourable to him; he was sent there to act the part of a spy, and worm out the secrets of the persons who were in durance for being concerned in the Cellamare conspiracy. It is asserted, that he had already appeared in a similar degrading character at Lille, in 1708, where he was paid for intelligence by the allies and the French, and betrayed both parties. Lenglet was of a quarrelsome and caustic disposition, which involved him in personal disputes, and he appears to have paid little respect to truth; but he had at least one estimable quality, an unconquerable love of independence,—no offers, however flattering or lucrative, could prevail on him to place himself under the galling yoke of the rich and the great. His death, which took place in 1755, was occasioned by his falling into the fire while he was asleep.

The Bastile twice received Laurent Angliviel la Beaumelle, who was born in 1727, at Vallerangue, in Lower Languedoc. His first imprisonment, in 1753, which lasted six months, was caused by his Notes on the Age of Louis XIV.; for his second, in the following year, he was indebted to a passage in his Memoirs of Madame de Maintenon, which charged the Austrian court with keeping poisoners in its pay. His release, at the end of five months, was generously obtained by the intercession of that court which he had so grossly insulted. La Beaumelle was brought up in the Catholic religion, but, during a residence of some years in Geneva, he became a protestant. At the age of twenty-one, he was appointed professor of French literature at Copenhagen, and his first work, "Mes Pensées," was published in the Danish capital. Lured by the patronage which Frederic of Prussia held out to authors, La Beaumelle removed to Berlin. Voltaire, who was then at the Prussian court, visited him, and expressed a wish to be numbered among his friends; but their amicable intercourse was soon changed into deadly hostility. There was a short paragraph in Mes Pensées, which wounded the vanity of Voltaire, and La Beaumelle was also guilty of having a respect for Maupertuis, whom Voltaire detested, and missed no opportunity of ridiculing. The rabid hatred with which Voltaire ever after pursued his foe, and the virulent and even low abuse which he lavished on him, can excite only disgust. The malign influence of Voltaire having rendered Berlin a disagreeable abode, La Beaumelle returned to his native country. After having resided in peace at Toulouse for several years, he obtained a place in the King's Library, at Paris, which, however, he did not long retain: his death, which happened in 1779, followed close upon his

appointment. La Beaumelle had certainly no mean talents; and it is much to be regretted, that they were so often thrown away upon literary squabbles. Of his works, the best are Mes Pensées; a Defence of the Spirit of Laws; and Letters to M. de Voltaire.

The literary successor of La Beaumelle in the Bastile, was Francis de Marsy, a native of Paris, born in 1714. After he had finished his studies, he was admitted a member of the society of Jesuits. His first productions were two Latin poems, on Tragedy and Painting, from which, particularly the latter, he derived considerable reputation, his Latinity being good, his versification flowing and spirited, and his imagery poetical. Encouraged perhaps by the praise which he received for these works, he became an author by profession, and wasted, in the ungrateful occupation of writing for booksellers, those talents which, otherwise employed, might have given him permanent fame. One of his tasks, an analysis of the works of Bayle, which he published in 1755, was condemned by the parliament of Paris, and made him, for some months, an inmate of the Bastile. He died in 1763. Among his works are the first twelve volumes of the History of the Chinese, Japanese, &c.; and an edition of Rabelais in eight volumes. The former is a hasty compilation; the latter he spoiled, by retouching and modernising the style—it is probable, however, that the clothing of Rabelais in a modern garb was a sagacious scheme of the publishers.

To hazard censure upon an individual of the privileged class, or even to be suspected of having done so, was an infallible passport to the Bastile. That versatile and elegant writer Marmontel was one of those who were taught the danger of a courtier's hostility. This enemy

was the Duke d'Aumont, whom, in his Memoirs, he truly describes as being "the most stupid, the most vain, and the most choleric, of all the gentlemen of the king's chamber."

John Francis Marmontel, the son of parents in a humble station, was born in 1723, at the town of Bort, in the Limousin. He has drawn a delightful picture of the comfort and content in which his family lived. "The property on which we all subsisted was very small. Order, domestic arrangement, labour, a little trade, and frugality, kept us above want. Our little garden produced nearly as many vegetables as the consumption of the family required; the orchard afforded us fruits; and our quinces, our apples, and our pears, preserved with the honey of our bees, were, in winter, most exquisite breakfasts for the good old woman and children. They were clothed by the small flock of sheep that folded at St. Thomas. My aunts spun the wool, and the hemp of the field that furnished us with linen; and in the evenings, when, by the light of a lamp, which our nut-trees supplied with oil, the young people of the neighbourhood came to help us to dress our flax, the picture was exquisite. The harvest of the little farm secured us subsistence; the wax and honey of the bees, to which one of my aunts carefully attended, formed a revenue that cost but little; the oil pressed from our green walnuts had a taste and smell that we preferred to the flavour and perfume of that of the olive. Our buck-wheat cakes, moistened, smoking hot, with the good butter of Mont d'Or, were a delicious treat to us. I know not what dish would have appeared to us better than our turnips and chesnuts; and on a winter evening, while these fine turnips were roasting round the fire, and we heard the water boiling in the vase where

our chesnuts were cooling, so relishing and sweet, how did our hearts palpitate with joy! I well remember, too, the perfume that a fine quince used to exhale when roasting under the ashes, and the pleasure our grandmother used to have in dividing it amongst us. The most moderate of women made us all gluttons. Thus, in a family where nothing was lost, trivial objects united made plenty, and left but little to expend, in order to satisfy all our wants. In the neighbouring forest there was an abundance of dead wood of trifling value—there my father was permitted to make his annual provision. The excellent butter of the mountain, and the most delicate cheese, were common, and cost but little; wine was not dear, and my father himself drank of it soberly."

Marmontel was designed by his father to be brought up to trade, but his desire of learning was unconquerable, and was at last allowed to be gratified. His early education he received from the Jesuits, at the humble college of Mauriac, and he completed it at Clermont and Toulouse. At one time he fancied that he had a vocation for the ecclesiastical state, and he would have become one of the fraternity of Jesuits, had he not been deterred by the pathetic entreaties and remonstrances of his mother. It was at Toulouse that he made his first literary essay, in a competition for one of the prizes bestowed by the academy for Floral Games. A correspondence, into which he entered with Voltaire, induced the poet to advise him to take up his abode in Paris, and on this advice he acted in 1745. For a considerable time after his settling in the capital he had to contend against poverty. The complete success which attended his tragedy of Dionysius the Tyrant, lifted him at once into fortune and fame. "In one day," says he, "almost in one instant, I found

myself rich and celebrated. I made a worthy use of my riches, but it was not so with my celebrity. My fame became the origin of my dissipation, and the source of my errors. Till then, my life had been obscure and retired." It is honourable to him that all his family benefited by his improved circumstances; and, in palliation of his errors, we must consider how difficult it was for a young and flattered poet to escape the contagious effect of a corrupted capital. He finally renounced his licentious habits, and became an affectionate and happy husband and father.

Dionysius was followed by Aristomenes, Cleopatra, and other tragedies, of which only Aristomenes was eminently successful. His wide-spread reputation at length gained for him the patronage of Madame de Pompadour, through whom he obtained the place of Secretary of the Royal Buildings, and a pension on the French Mercury. It was for the Mercury that he began those tales, which have been translated into English under the erroneous appellation of Moral Tales. On the death of Boissy in 1758, Marmontel, by the favour of Pompadour, received the patent of the Mercury; and, under his management, the work rose into high repute. He, however, enjoyed this lucrative employment for only two years. Cury, a wit, who had been deeply injured by the stupid and spiteful Duke d'Aumont, composed a satire on his titled enemy. He repeated the verses to Marmontel, and the latter, who had an excellent memory, repeated them to a company at Madame Geoffrin's. This circumstance was instantly reported to the Duke d'Aumont, who lost not a moment in procuring a lettre-de-cachet, by virtue of which Marmontel was conveyed to the Bastile, charged with being the author of the satire. His confinement lasted only eleven days; but as he generously re-

fused to betray the writer's name, the patent of the Mercury was taken from him, and nothing was left to him except a pension payable out of the profits of the work.

In 1763, Marmontel became a member of the French Academy; and, twenty years later, he was appointed its perpetual secretary. After he was deprived of the Mercury, he pursued his literary labours, for many years, with equal vigour and credit. Among the works which he produced during that period are Belisarius, the Incas, a translation of the Pharsalia, a new series of tales, various comic operas, miscellaneous pieces, a History of the Regency of the Duke of Orleans, Elements of Literature, and Memoirs of his own Life. During the fierce struggles between the republican parties, after the downfall of the throne, Marmontel lived in retirement, and in a state of penury which bordered upon poverty. He was elected a member of the council of elders, in 1797, but the revolution of the 18th Fructidor deprived him of his seat, and he withdrew to his cottage in Normandy, happy in not being exiled to another hemisphere, as was the case, with many of his colleagues. Marmontel died of apoplexy, on the last day of 1799.

Morellet, the friend, and by marriage the relative, of Marmontel, was, like that writer, one who suffered from the vengeance of the great. It must be owned, however, that there was less injustice in his punishment than in that of his friend, as he was really the author of the satire for which he was confined, and it was published under circumstances which made even Voltaire doubt whether the conduct of the writer was perfectly justifiable. Andrew Morellet, to whom some of his acquaintance gave the punning appellation of Mord-les, or Bite-'em, was

born at Lyons, in 1727. He received the early part of his education at the Jesuits' College in that city, and he completed his studies at Paris, in the seminary of Trente-Trois, and the Sorbonne. He appears, however, to have paid at least as much attention to the works of modern philosophers as to those of the theologians. At Paris he became intimate with D'Alembert, Diderot, and other contributors to the Encyclopædia. Returning to Paris, after a tour which he made with a pupil, he was gladly admitted into the most talented society in the capital. Palissot, in his comedy of the Philosophers, having ridiculed the philosophical party, Morellet resented the insult by a satirical production, called The Vision. In this work there were some severe lines on the Princess of Robecq, an enemy of the encyclopedists, who was then lying on her death-bed. For these lines Morellet suffered an imprisonment of several months in the Bastile. Morellet was admitted into the French Academy in 1784, and he contributed much to the Dictionary of that body. In 1803 he became a member of the Institute, and in 1807 attained a seat in the legislature. His life was protracted to the age of ninety-two; and, for nearly the whole of that time his pen was actively employed on subjects of political economy, and general literature, and in translations, principally from the English language. A selection from his writings was made by himself, in four volumes, with the title of Literary and Philosophical Miscellanies of the 18th Century. He died in 1819.

By Marmontel, who married his friend's niece, he is thus characterised: "The abbé Morellet, with more order and clearness, in a very rich magazine of every kind of knowledge, possessed in conversation a source of sound, pure, profound ideas, that, without ever being exhausted,

never overflowed. He showed himself at our dinners with an openness of soul, a just and firm mind, and with as much rectitude in his heart as in his understanding. One of his talents, and the most distinguishing, was a turn of pleasantry delicately ironical, of which Swift alone had found the secret. With this facility of being severe, if he had been inclined, no man was ever less so; and, if he ever permitted himself to indulge in personal raillery, it was but a rod in his hand to chastise insolence or punish malignity."

A less amiable captive than Marmontel and Morellet next claims our attention. Though he was by no means destitute of talent or information, Victor Riquetti, Marquis of Mirabeau, owes the redemption of his name from oblivion less to his numerous literary productions than to his being the father of the celebrated Mirabeau. The marquis, who was descended from a Florentine family, was born at Perthes in 1715. He became a disciple of Quesnay, and published many works, to disseminate the doctrines of the political economists. His compositions are disfigured by a detestable style, great affectation, and a want of method. Of his labours, which amount to more than twenty volumes, it will suffice to mention L'Ami des Hommes and the Théorie de l'Impôt. With reference to the former, Voltaire satirically speaks of Mirabeau as "the friend of man, who talks, who talks, who talks, who decides, who dictates, who is so fond of the feudal government, who commits so many blunders, and who gets so often into the wrong box—the pretended friend of the human race." He bestows equal contempt on the second work—"I have read the Theory of Taxation," says he, "and it seems to me no less absurd than ridiculously written. I do not like those friends of man,

who are for ever telling the enemies of the state 'we are ruined;—come;—you will have an easy task.'" The government seems to have been of the same opinion as Voltaire, for the Theory of Taxation procured for its author a lodging in the Bastile. Mirabeau, however, continued to write and to publish till nearly his last moments; he died in 1789. This pretended friend of the human race, as Voltaire with justice calls him, deserved abhorrence in all the relations of social life. He was an oppressive master, and a tyrannical and brutal husband and father. He was perpetually soliciting for lettres-de-cachet to plunge some branch or other of his family into a dungeon. Of those letters he is said to have obtained fifty-four, many of which were enforced against his highly-gifted though erring son, the Count de Mirabeau, whom he hated, and whom, by his persevering cruelty, he contributed to drive into desperate courses.

Among those who felt the vengeance of the vindictive Pompadour was the Chevalier Resseguier, a native of Toulouse, who was much admired in the Parisian circles for his gaiety and wit. An epigram which he aimed at the royal mistress, speedily made him an inmate of the Bastile. There, like many other unfortunate victims of the marchioness, he might perhaps have spent the rest of his days, had not his brother, a member of the parliament of Toulouse, hastened up to the capital and succeeded in mollifying Pompadour. In their way home from the Bastile, the grave magistrate began to give his brother some prudent advice. Little disposed to listen to it, the chevalier thrust his head out of the coach window, and, in the words of Philoxenus of Syracuse exclaimed, "Take me back to the quarries!" The brother still persisting to administer caution and reproof, the chevalier lost all

patience, censured him bitterly for having stooped to ask a favour from the marchioness, and then leaped from the carriage. Resseguier of course continued to scatter his sarcasms on all sides. For one of them, directed against the notorious President Maupeou, who was afterwards chancellor, he ran considerable risk of paying a second visit to the Bastile. He was dining, on a fast-day, at the house of M. de Sartine, and some of the guests were admiring the size of the fish. "Yes," said Marin, (whose name the reader will meet with again,) "they are very fine fish; but I dined yesterday with the president, and he had still larger." "Ah!" replied Resseguier, "I do not wonder in the least at that; it is the place for everything monstrous." Louis XV. was informed of this pungent attack on the instrument of his despotism, and was greatly irritated by it.

The next literary prisoner was the involuntary proxy of an offender, who took care to get beyond the reach of the police. In 1761, Grouber de Grouberdal, a German by birth, and barrister by profession, author of Irus, ou le Savetier du Coin, and a poem with the title of Le Sexe Triomphant, was sent to the Bastile, on suspicion of having written a satire called the Jesuitics, to which he appears to have only contributed some verses. Grouber, however, escaped with no more than a month's imprisonment. A friend of Grouber's was the real author. Henry Joseph Dulaurens was born at Douay, and very early displayed abilities of a superior order. He was less amiable than talented; for he is said to have been suspicious, sarcastic, hasty, restless, and turbulent: that he was licentious, is proved by his works. Dulaurens was destined for the church, but abandoned the clerical profession. His satire, the Jesuitics, which was modelled

on the celebrated Philippics of La Grange Chancel, was aimed at the Jesuits, to whom he had long been bitterly hostile. Fearing that it would bring him into peril, he set off for Holland, on the morning after it was published, without warning his friend Grouber that danger was to be apprehended. In Holland he became a writer for the booksellers; but, though his pen was extremely fertile, and his productions, which were generally marked by originality and spirit, obtained an extensive sale, he was scarcely able to avoid sinking into poverty: the booksellers throve on those fruits of his talent, by which he himself was barely kept alive. By his flight from Paris, Dulaurens had eluded a residence in the Bastile, but it ultimately brought on him a more protracted confinement than he would have endured had he remained in France. In the hope of bettering his condition, he quitted Amsterdam, and went to Liége, whence he removed to Frankfort. While he was living in the latter city, he was prosecuted by the ecclesiastical chamber of Mentz, as an anti-religious writer, and was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. He died in 1797, in a convent near Mentz, after having been a prisoner during thirty years. Of his works, the most remarkable are, Le Compère Mathieu, L'Evangile de la Raison, Irma, and L'Aretin Moderne, in prose; and Le Balai, and La Chandelle d'Arras, two mock-heroic poems;—of these poems, which are of considerable length, the first was composed in twenty-two days, and the second in fifteen.

Of all the writers who, during the reign of Louis XV., found or deserved a lodging in the Bastile, Peter Robbé de Beauveset may, perhaps, be considered as one of the most degraded, in a moral point of view. He was born at Vendôme, in 1714, received a good education, and was

not destitute of talent. At an early age, he began to write poems of the coarsest obscenity, and he continued the practice till almost the close of a long life. To repeat them to all companies that would listen, seems to have been one of his greatest pleasures. Next to licentious composition, he delighted in satire. His verses were insufferably harsh; but they now and then displayed happy thoughts and forcible expressions. To give an idea of his propensity to wallow in the mire, it will be sufficient to say, that he chose for one of his themes the only disease which is a disgrace to the sufferer, and that the song was worthy of the theme. This drew on him the sarcasm, likely enough to be true, that he was "the bard of the unclean malady, and that he was full of his subject." Having tried his satirical skill upon Louis XV., an order was issued to seize his papers, and he would certainly have paid a visit to the Bastile, had he not skilfully parried the blow. Being timely warned of his danger, he destroyed the obnoxious piece, and substituted in its place another of an opposite kind. This stratagem was successful. Instead of sending him to prison, the king pensioned him, and gave him apartments in the palace of St. Germain. Severe censors have hinted, that the debauched monarch wished to have a monopoly of the poet's obscene rhymes. Robbé likewise received a pension from the Archbishop of Paris, on condition that he should not publish his objectionable pieces. He kept to the letter of his agreement; he did not print them; he contented himself with reciting them to as many hearers as he could find. The motive of the archbishop we can comprehend; but it is not easy to perceive what could have induced the Duchess of Olone to leave a legacy of 15,000 francs to so shameless a writer, and to speak in flattering terms of his reputation

as an author! Before his death, which took place in 1794, he is said to have manifested some signs of reformation.

The liability to be thrust into a prison, for the purpose of gratifying a courtier, or other powerful enemy, was not the fate of authors alone: the men who devoted their talents, and shed their blood, to enlarge or defend the dominion of their country, were equally subject to it. Striking proof of this fact is afforded by the persecution which fell to the lot of Mahé de la Bourdonnais and Count Lally.

Bernard Francis Mahé de la Bourdonnais was born in 1699, at St. Malo; entered the service of the East India Company at an early period, and displayed such talent, and such consummate knowledge of mercantile as well as of naval concerns, that, in 1735, he was appointed governor-general of the Isles of France and Bourbon. On his arrival in the Isle of France, he found everything in a state of penury and confusion. In a very short time, however, he showed what can be done by a man of abilities and perseverance. A new and vivifying spirit was breathed by him into the languishing frame of the colony. Law and police were established; arsenals, docks, forts, magazines, and canals, were constructed; and the cultivation of indigo, cotton, manioc, and sugar, was introduced. All this was accomplished within the space of five years. Twice La Bourdonnais was sent to the coast of Coromandel, with succours for his ungenerous rival and enemy Dupleix; the first time in 1741, the second in 1746. To narrate all the exertions of La Bourdonnais on these occasions would require a volume. His conduct was such as to win the warm praise of the English, who suffered by his success. The result of his operations, in 1746, was the surrender of Madras;

but the terms of the capitulation were dishonourably violated by Dupleix, in spite of the remonstrances of the indignant conqueror. Dupleix having appointed another governor at the Isle of France, La Bourdonnais returned to Europe, and on his way homeward, was taken by an English vessel. In England he met with that reception which was due to a talented and noble foe, and was allowed to proceed on parole to his native country. A far different greeting awaited him in France, where his mean and malignant enemies had long been labouring effectually for his ruin. He had only been three days in Paris before all his papers were seized, and he was hurried to the Bastile. There he was kept in solitary confinement for twenty-six months, not even his wife and children being allowed access to him; nor was he permitted to have the means of writing. One of the charges against him, founded on the testimony of a soldier who had been hired to perjure himself, was that he had secretly conveyed on board of his vessel a large sum of money from Madras. To refute this charge, by showing that it was impossible for the witness to have seen any such proceeding from the spot where he was posted, La Bourdonnais, destitute as he was of materials, drew from memory an exact plan of Madras, and contrived to have it conveyed to the commissioners who were appointed to investigate his conduct. The plan was drawn on a white handkerchief, with a rude sort of pencil formed from a slip of box, and dipped in brown and yellow colours, which he obtained from coffee, and the verdigris scraped from copper coins. This curious document quickened the movements of his judges, and they took steps to bring the question to an issue. After having undergone an imprisonment of three years, he was

pronounced innocent, and was released. The gift of liberty came too late to save his life; his health was undermined by grief, anxiety, and the unwholesomeness of his dungeon, and his fortune had melted away in the hands of his persecutors: he languished in severe pain, and in a state of indigence, till 1755, when death put an end to his sufferings.

A doom still more severe than that of La Bourdonnais was assigned to the unfortunate Count Lally. Thomas Arthur Lally was born in 1702, and was the son of Sir Gerard Lally, one of those high-minded but mistaken Irishmen, whose ideas of duty led them to expatriate themselves rather than renounce their allegiance to the Second James. Young Lally was early conversant with war; he was not twelve years old when he first mounted guard, in the trenches before Barcelona. In the course of the next thirty years, he distinguished himself in numerous battle-fields, particularly at Dettingen and Fontenoy, and was employed in missions to England and Russia, the former of which, not a little perilous, was undertaken in 1737, for the service of the Stuart family. To the house of Hanover he was an inveterate foe, and he was fertile in plans for its overthrow. On the breaking out of the war between England and France in 1756, he was made a lieutenant-general, and appointed commandant of all the French establishments in Hindostan. Unfortunately for him, the government unwisely delayed his departure, and withdrew a part of the force which had been intended to accompany him. When he reached Pondicherry he found everything in confusion, none of the resources which he had expected to find, and, worse than all, men in office who knew that he meant to punish peculators, and who were therefore incessantly on the

alert to thwart all his plans. Their machinations were aided by his own defects; for he was harsh, violent, and headstrong, in an extraordinary degree. Voltaire says of him, that "he had found the secret of making himself hated by everybody," and that "every one except the executioner, had a right to kill him." There is much exaggeration in this; but it is certain that Lally was, and deserved to be, an unpopular man.

In spite of the scantiness of his means, Lally took the field against the English with a firm resolve to drive them out of India. His first operations were successful. He made himself master of Goudalour, Fort St. David, and Devicotta, but here his good fortune ended; he was foiled in an attack on Tanjore, and was subsequently compelled to raise the siege of Madras. His failure must not be attributed to want of military skill; he was nearly without resources, and there was in his own army a powerful faction which was hostile to him. The council of Pondicherry, too, hated him with such a deadly hatred that it rejoiced in, and even helped to cause his disappointments. Invested at last in Pondicherry by the English, he defended the place with desperate courage, but was compelled by famine to surrender.

On his return to France, Lally attacked his enemies with his wonted impetuosity. Their influence, however, was superior to his, and he was sent to the Bastile. Nineteen months elapsed before he was even questioned. The trial was at last commenced, and it occupied more than two years. The whole of the proceedings teemed with the most flagrant injustice; there was a manifest determination to send the prisoner to the scaffold. The language used by some of his judges deserved the severest punishment. Sentence of death was pronounced on the

6th May, 1766. On its being made known to him, Lally stabbed himself with a pair of compasses, but the wound was not mortal. Three days afterwards, he was taken to execution, and, that nothing might be wanting to lacerate his feelings, he was conveyed in a mud-cart, and his mouth was gagged. This brutality had a contrary effect to that which was expected; it excited for him the sympathy of the spectators, and covered his enemies with execration and disgrace. The son of Count Lally, advantageously known during the revolution as Count Lally-Tolendal, obtained, some years afterwards, a solemn reversal of the sentence, and the restoration of his parent's honour.

Caradeuc de la Chalotais, a Breton magistrate, estimable for his talents and rectitude, is the next who comes forward on the scene. He appears to have been indebted for his misfortunes partly to the Jesuits, whose order he had assisted to suppress in France, and partly to the Duke d' Aiguillon, whom he had offended, by venturing to hint a doubt of his courage. He was a native of Rennes, born in 1701, and became attorney-general in the parliament of Brittany. His two Comptes Rendus against the Jesuits, which contributed much to their overthrow, and his Essay on National Education, which forms a kind of supplement to them, are spoken of in the most laudatory terms by Voltaire. La Chalotais subsequently acted a conspicuous part, when the parliament of Brittany refused to register some of the royal edicts, which violated the Breton privileges. The Duke d' Aiguillon was then governor of the province, and we may believe that he was not sorry to take vengeance for the sarcasm which the attorney-general had aimed at him. The Jesuits, too, are said to have spared no pains to

accomplish their enemy's destruction. In November, 1765, La Chalotais, his son, and four of the parliament counsellors, were arrested, and in the following month they were placed in close confinement, in the citadel of St. Malo. The main charges against La Chalotais were, that he had written two anonymous letters to one of the secretaries of state, which contained insults upon the king and his ministers, and that he had entered into a conspiracy against the regal authority. With respect to the letters, though some persons accustomed to examine hand-writings asserted them to be his, the vulgar style and incorrect spelling render it in the highest degree improbable that he was their author. He himself denied the charge in the most emphatic manner. La Chalotais was carefully secluded from all correspondence, and deprived of pen and ink; he, nevertheless, contrived to produce three eloquent memorials in his defence, and to procure a wide circulation of them. They were written on scraps of paper which had contained sugar and chocolate, with a pen made from a toothpick, and ink composed of soot, sugar, vinegar, and water. A commission was at first formed to try the prisoners, but the cause was afterwards removed into the council of state, and the captives were transferred to the Bastile. A stop was, however, put to the proceedings by the king, and the accused individuals were exiled to Saintes. An attempt was made to prevail on La Chalotais to resign his office, but he refused to listen to the messenger. On the death of Louis XV. his successor allowed La Chalotais to resume his seat in parliament, and the magistrate retained it till his decease in 1785.

The celebrated Curran, whose conversational talents no one that witnessed them could possibly forget, once said

to me, in allusion to the transient intoxication produced by champagne, that it made a runaway rap at a man's head. It may, perhaps, from a similar reason, be allowable to say, that a runaway rap was made at the liberty of the person who is the subject of this sketch. Francis Louis Marin had scarcely time to lament the loss of his liberty before it was restored to him. Marin was a Provençal born at Ciotat, in 1721: after having been a chorister, and then an organist, he adopted the clerical profession, and went to Paris, where he became tutor to the son of a nobleman. His manner and figure, which were good, and his talents, which were far from contemptible, gained him many patrons in the French capital. He now quitted his ecclesiastical pursuits, was admitted a barrister, and published various works, one of which, the History of Saladin, is perhaps the best of all his productions, and is still in repute: it was dedicated to St. Florentin, one of the ministers, and gained for its author the appointment of royal censor, to which was subsequently added that of secretary-general to Sartine, who had been placed at the head of the inquisitorial office, to which printers and publishers were amenable. As secretary-general he seems to have satisfied no one; he was desirous of befriending the philosophical party, in which he had several friends, but was still more desirous of retaining his lucrative post. The consequence was, that he sometimes winked at, and even aided, infractions of the law, and then sought to propitiate his employers by additional vigilance and severity. Marin was certainly not overburthened with delicacy; and, unless he is much belied, he increased his income by acting as purveyor to the disgraceful amours of his royal master. In 1763, he was confined for twenty-four hours in the Bastile, for having,

in his censorial character, neglected to expunge some lines from one of Dorat's tragedies. A few years afterwards, he was deprived of a pension of 2000 livres, because he had allowed Favart's comic opera of the Gleaner to be acted and published. In 1771, he was made editor of the Gazette de France, in which capacity he brought upon himself a perpetual shower of epigrams and sarcasms. Many of these annoying shafts were aimed at him by the "Nouvelles à-la-main," and he had the weakness to demand that the editor of the paper should be arrested. He had soon the misfortune or the folly to provoke a much more formidable enemy, the witty and eloquent Beaumarchais, who covered him with ridicule. To complete his vexation, no long time elapsed before the Count de Vergennes dismissed him, and in the most humiliating manner, from the royal censorship and the superintendence of the Gazette. Marin then retired to his native town, where he busied himself in literary pursuits. By the revolution he lost a considerable part of his income; but to his credit it must be owned, that he did not lose his temper or his spirits: he died in 1809. Marin had some praiseworthy qualities; he is said to have been ready to do acts of kindness, and even to have often run serious risks to serve his friends. But here we must stop, for it appears that his principles and his morals were lamentably defective; one of his biographers, who writes of him in a friendly spirit, owns that in extreme old age he had "a taste for pleasure, and even for libertinism."

Less fortunate than Marin, Farmain De Rozoi, or, as he was generally called Durosoi, did not pay a visit of only twenty-four hours to the Bastile. Durosoi was a Parisian by birth, and seems to have early betaken him-

self to "the idle trade" of literature. He tried many kinds of authorship, and was far below mediocrity in all, novels, histories, poems, and plays, especially the latter, he poured forth in rapid succession, drawing down abundance of bitter sarcasms from the critics, and gaining little emolument to himself. Among the dramatic subjects which he chose was Henry IV., and he was so delighted with his hero that he brought him on the stage in three different pieces. The appellation of "the modern Ravaillac," which he acquired by these pieces, shows how woefully the monarch fared under his hands. But Durosoi had worse enemies than the critics: on an erroneous suspicion of his being the author of two obnoxious works, he was shut up for two months in the Bastile. When the revolution broke out he espoused the royal cause, and became editor of the Gazette de Paris. He was a zealous and certainly an honest advocate of that cause. Though slenderly endowed with talents, he was by no means deficient in courage and noble feelings. When Louis XVI., after his flight to the frontier, was under restraint in the Tuileries, Durosoi formed the romantic but generous project of obtaining the king's liberty, by inducing the friends of Louis to offer themselves as hostages for him; and a great number of individuals actually consented to render themselves personally responsible for the sovereign's conduct. Durosoi did not slacken in his hostility to the revolutionists, till their final success on the 10th of August compelled him to drop the pen. He was one of their earliest victims on the scaffold, he being executed by torch-light only nineteen days after the downfall of the monarchy. He died with the utmost firmness. In a letter which he left behind him he declared, that, "a royalist like him was worthy

to die on St. Louis's day, for his religion and his king." It is said that, with the laudable desire of benefiting mankind by his death, he was desirous that his blood should be employed in trying the experiment of transfusion.

The French revolution, which ultimately consigned Durosoi to death, opened the prison-gates of a man, of whom few particulars are recorded, but whose courage and unmerited sufferings deserve our admiration and pity. It will scarcely be credited that, from a very early period of the reign of Louis XV. there existed an infamous monopoly of grain, which was managed for the benefit of the monarch. Corn, bought at a low price in plentiful seasons, was hoarded up, and sold at an immense profit in times of scarcity. The circumstance was kept as secret as possible for many years, but the truth got out, and the name of "the compact of famine" was popularly given to the monopoly. A patriotic individual, Prévost de Beaumont, the secretary of the clergy, formed the daring project of at one sweep gaining possession of all the documents relative to this affair, and revealing to France the whole machinery of the scandalous system. When, however, he was about to carry his plan into effect, he was seized by the police, and conveyed to the Bastile. In that prison, and at Vincennes, he spent twenty-two years, his hands and feet heavily ironed, a bare board for his bed, and a scanty portion of bread and water for his daily subsistence. He would no doubt have perished in his dungeon, had not the chains which he had so long worn been broken by the strong hand of the French people.

A striking proof how liable to abuse is irresponsible power placed in the hands of ministers of state and of monopolising corporations, is afforded by the persecution of Barletti St. Paul, a man of considerable abilities, who

was born at Paris, in 1734. So precocious was his talent that, at the age of sixteen, he had made himself master of all that the best teachers could communicate to him. After having been for a while sub-preceptor of the junior branches of the royal family, he was involved in a quarrel, in consequence of which he quitted France. He resided for six years at Naples, after which he was intrusted by the Dauphin with a diplomatic mission at Rome; and, when he had fulfilled this mission, he returned to his native country.

Rapidly as St. Paul had acquired knowledge, he was thoroughly dissatisfied with the method of instruction then in use, and particularly with the various and discordant systems which were followed by preceptors. He, therefore, undertook the Herculean task of forming a collection of elementary treatises on the sciences and arts, with new modes of studying languages. On this encyclopedic labour he was, at intervals, employed during nearly the whole of his life. Eighteen volumes of it were completed, and he was on the point of seeing them brought before the public, when his prospects were destroyed by the base jealousy of one learned body, and the legal despotism of another. As the cost of printing the work would be great, a society of his friends was formed, for the purpose of accomplishing the publication in concert, and a public meeting was announced, to deliberate on the necessary arrangements. But the University of Paris had taken the alarm. Like all old and pampered institutions, it hated novelty, and trembled lest its monopoly should be shaken. To avert the dreaded evil, it had recourse to the parliament; and the compliant parliament issued a prohibition against the meeting. This step was backed by the appointment of four commissioners to examine the

work. It did not require the spirit of prophecy to predict that commissioners, chosen under such auspices, would be anything but impartial. The hackneyed joke, of suing his Satanic majesty in one of the infernal courts, is pretty sure to be realised on such occasions. The report which they made was so unfavourable that a complete stop was put to the scheme of publishing. St. Paul did not tamely submit to this treatment. He procured to be printed, at Brussels, a pamphlet, which was entitled The Secret Revealed. Sartine, the minister of police, who had been one of his active enemies, was somewhat roughly handled in this production. The king of spies, gaols, and gibbets, was not a man to be attacked with impunity, and he avenged himself in a manner which was worthy of him, by suppressing the pamphlet, and sending its author to the Bastile.

At the expiration of three months, the intercession of the Cardinal de Rohan obtained the liberation of St. Paul. He then went to Spain, where he became professor of belles-lettres at Segovia; an appointment which he held for three years. Returning again to France, he published a New System of Typography, to diminish the labour of compositors. For this the government rewarded him by a grant of twenty thousand livres, and by printing five hundred copies of his volume at the Louvre press. His improvement consisted in casting in one mass the diphthongs, triphthongs, and all the most frequently occurring combinations of letters. A similar plan, with the name of the Logographic, was tried in London a few years afterwards, but it was soon abandoned.

St. Paul continued to labour indefatigably on his ameliorated system of education: he gained in its favour the

suffrage of Sicard, who was one of three persons whom the National Institute nominated to examine it; but he did not live to complete it, and only a small specimen of it was ever published. He passed unhurt through the storms of the Revolution, and died at Paris, in 1809. One of his best works, "The Means of avoiding the customary Errors in the Instruction of Youth," suggests a mode by which two scholars may reciprocally give lessons to each other.

Almost the last prisoner, perhaps the last of any note, who was committed to the Bastile in the closing year of Louis the Fifteenth's reign, was a man who subsequently acted a conspicuous part in politics and war. Charles Francis Duperier Dumouriez, born at Cambray, in 1739, was the son of an army commissary, who translated the Ricciardetto, and wrote some dramatic pieces. After having been educated with much care, Dumouriez obtained a cornetcy, and, before the close of the seven years' war, he had received two-and-twenty wounds, nineteen of which were inflicted on him in a combat which he gallantly maintained against twenty hussars, five of whom he disabled. Peace being concluded, he travelled in Italy, Spain, and Portugal. In 1768 and 1769, he served with distinction in Corsica, and rose to the rank of colonel. The Duke de Choiseul employed him in 1770, on a mission in Poland, to support the confederation of Bar against the Russians, but the dismissal of the duke, which took place soon after, led to the recall of the envoy. Dumouriez was next intrusted by Louis XV. with a secret mission to the court of Gustavus of Sweden, relative to the revolution which that sovereign was then planning. This was done by Louis, who was in the habit of taking similar steps, without the knowledge of

the Duke d'Aiguillon, the minister for foreign affairs. Dumouriez was in consequence arrested at Hamburg, by order of the duke, and conveyed to the Bastile, Louis not having spirit enough to avow his own acts. During his six months' imprisonment, Dumouriez wrote various works. The accession of Louis XVI. restored the captive to liberty; and he successively obtained the government of Cherbourg, and the command of the country between Nantes and Bordeaux. That such a man should not take an active part in the French Revolution was impossible. But Dumouriez was not, as the ultra-royalists have unjustly described him to be, an enemy of the throne: he was, in truth, a constitutional royalist. In 1792, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general, and was appointed minister for foreign affairs, from which office he was shortly afterwards removed to the war department. That department, however, he held only for four days, at the end of which term he resigned. The duration of his official existence did not exceed three months. He was now placed at the head of the army which was destined to repel the Prussians, who were led by the Duke of Brunswick. By a masterly disposition of his troops, in the defiles of Champagne, he completely foiled the enemy, and compelled them to make a ruinous retreat. He then broke into the Netherlands, gained the battle of Jemappe, revolutionised the whole country, and carried the French arms into Holland. Quitting his army for a while, he visited Paris, for the purpose of endeavouring to save the king, but in that he failed, and rendered himself an object of suspicion. The tide of military success, too, at length began to turn against him. He lost the battle of Neerwinden, and was forced to abandon the Low Countries. Commissioners were now sent by the

Convention to arrest him; and, after having vainly endeavoured to rally his army on his side, he was obliged to seek for safety in flight. After having resided in various foreign countries, he finally settled in England, where he was often consulted by the ministers. Though he was decidedly hostile to the Emperor Napoleon, he took no share in the restoration of the Bourbons, nor did he approve of their conduct. Dumouriez died on the 14th of March, 1823, and was interred at Henley, in Oxfordshire. His works are numerous: the most interesting of them are, his Memoirs, and the Present State of Portugal.

CHAPTER XI.

Captivity and Sufferings of Masers de Latude—Cause of his Imprisonment—He is removed from the Bastile to Vincennes—He escapes—He is retaken, and sent to the Bastile—Kindness of M. Berryer—D'Alegre is confined in the same apartment with him—Latude forms a plan for escaping—Preparations for executing it—The Prisoners descend from the summit of the Bastile, and escape—They are recaptured in Holland, and brought back—Latude is thrown into a horrible dungeon—He tames rats, and makes a musical pipe—Plans suggested by him—His writing materials—He attempts suicide—Pigeons tamed by him—New plans suggested by him—Finds means to fling a packet of papers from the top of the Bastile—He is removed to Vincennes—He escapes—Is recaptured—Opens a communication with his fellow-prisoners—Is transferred to Charenton—His situation there—His momentary liberation—He is re-arrested, and sent to the Bicêtre—Horrors of that prison—Heroic benevolence of Madame Legros—She succeeds in obtaining his release—Subsequent fate of Latude.

In one of the finest passages that ever flowed from his pen, Sterne alludes to the comparatively trifling effect produced on the mind, when it endeavours to form a collective idea of the misery which is felt by a throng of sufferers. "Leaning my head upon my hand," says he, "I began to figure to myself the miseries of confinement. I was in a right frame for it, and so I gave full scope to my imagination.

"I was going to begin with the millions of my fellow-creatures born to no inheritance but slavery; but finding, however affecting the picture was, that I could not bring it near me, but that the multitude of groups in it did but distract me, I took a single captive, and having first shut him up in his dungeon, I then looked through the twilight of his grated door to take his picture.

"I beheld his body half wasted away with long expectation and confinement, and felt what sickness of the heart it was which arises from hope deferred. Upon looking nearer, I saw him pale and feverish; in thirty years the western breeze had not once fanned his blood; he had seen no sun, no moon, in all that time—nor had the voice of friend or kinsman breathed through his lattice."

It is even as Sterne asserts. The contemplation of the woes which are undergone by a large aggregate of persons, seems indeed to act on the mind somewhat in the manner of a heavy misfortune; it bewilders and benumbs the feelings. When we read of a single individual falling beneath the knife of a murderer, we are more violently startled and thrilled, and the impression made is more permanent than when we read of the thousands who groan out their lives on the field of battle; though, in the latter case, the largest part of the victims, mutilated, torn, trampled on, and slowly dying without succour, and distant from all that is dear to them, endure agonies far beyond those which are inflicted by the stab of an assassin.

Let us, therefore, now follow the example of Sterne. Hitherto the reader has seen only a rapid succession of captives passing before him, like the shadows of a magic lantern; he has had but glimpses of the wretchedness that falls to the lot of a prisoner; for, with respect to nearly the whole of the individuals chronicled in this volume, we know, as to their situation while in durance, little beyond the circumstances of their having been incarcerated; their persecutors ensured their silence by retaining them till they sunk into the grave, or by the terror of becoming once more inmates of a dungeon. While the Bastile was standing, few would venture even to whisper

what they had experienced within its walls. Fortunately, however, there does exist one faithful record of the severest woes, protracted by untirable tormentors, through a series of years extending to half the natural life of man. Let us then avail ourselves of it, fix our attention steadily on a single individual, watch his anguish, bodily and mental, his privations, his struggles, and his despair, and mark how deeply the iron can be made to enter into his soul by vindictive and ruthless tyrants.

Henry Masers de Latude, the person alluded to, spent thirty-five years in the Bastile and other places of confinement. If we did not know that power, when it is held by the base-minded, is exercised by them without mercy, to punish whoever offends them, we might suppose that Latude brought his long agonies upon himself by the commission of some enormous crime. That he committed a fault is undeniable, and it was a fault of that sort which most disgusts high-spirited men, because it bears the stamp of meanness and fraud. It deserved a sharp reprimand, perhaps even a moderate chastisement; but no heart that was not as hard as the nether millstone, could have made it a pretext for the infliction of such lengthened misery as he was doomed to undergo.

Latude, who was in his twenty-fifth year when his misfortunes began, was the son of the Marquis de Latude, a military officer, and was born in Languedoc. He was intended for the engineer service, but the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle prevented him from being enrolled. The notorious Marchioness de Pompadour, who united in herself the double demerit of being the royal harlot and procuress, was then in the zenith of her power, and was as much detested by the people as she was favoured by the sovereign. As Latude was one day sitting in the

garden of the Tuileries, he heard two men vehemently inveighing against her; and a thought struck him, that by turning this circumstance to account, he might obtain her patronage. His plan was a clumsy one, and it was clumsily executed. He began by putting into the post-office a packet of harmless powder, directed to the marchioness; he then waited on her, related the conversation which he had overheard, said that he had seen them put a packet into the post-office, and expressed his fears that it contained some extremely subtle poison. She offered him a purse of gold, but he refused it, and declared that he was only desirous of being rewarded by her protection. Suspicious of his purpose, she wished to see his handwriting; and, therefore, under pretence of intending to communicate with him, she asked for his address. He wrote it, and unfortunately for him, he wrote it in the same hand in which he had directed the pretended poison. He was then graciously dismissed. The sameness of the writing, and the result of the experiments which she ordered to be made on the contents of the packet, convinced her that the whole was a fraud. It is scarcely possible not to smile at the blundering folly of the youthful impostor: had he sent real poison, and disguised his handwriting, he would perhaps have succeeded.

But this proved to be no laughing matter to the luckless Latude. The marchioness looked upon the trick as an unpardonable insult, and she was not slow in revenging it. In the course of a few days, while he was indulging in golden dreams, he was painfully awoke from them by the appearance of the officers of justice. They carried him to the Bastile, and there he was stripped, deprived of his money, jewels, and papers, clothed in wretched rags, and shut up in the Tower du Coin. On the following day,

the 2nd of May, 1749, he was interrogated by M. Berryer, the lieutenant of police. Unlike many of his class, Berryer was a man of feeling; he promised to intercede for him with the marchioness, and, in the meanwhile, he endeavoured to make him as comfortable as a man could be who was robbed of his liberty. To make the time pass less heavily, he gave him a comrade, a Jew, a man of abilities—Abuzaglo by name, who was accused of being a secret British agent. The two captives soon became friends; Abuzaglo had hope of speedy liberation through the influence of the Prince of Conti, and he promised to obtain the exercise of that influence in behalf of his companion. Latude, on his part, in case of his being first released, bound himself to strain every nerve to rescue Abuzaglo.

Ever on the listen to catch the conversation of the prisoners, the jailors appear to have obtained a knowledge of the hopes and reciprocal engagements of the friends. When Latude had been four months at the Bastile, three turnkeys entered, and said that an order was come to set him free. Abuzaglo embraced him, and conjured him to remember his promise. But no sooner had the joyful Latude crossed the threshold of his prison, than he was told that he was only going to be removed to Vincennes. Abuzaglo was liberated shortly after; but believing that Latude was free, and had broken his word to him, he ceased to take an interest in his fate.

It is not wonderful that the health of Latude gave way under the pressure of grief and disappointment. M. Berryer came to console him, removed him to the most comfortable apartment in the castle, and allowed him to walk daily for two hours in the garden. But he did not conceal that the marchioness was inflexible; and in

consequence of this, the captive, who felt a prophetic fear that he was destined to perpetual imprisonment, resolved to make an attempt to escape. Nearly nine months elapsed before he could find an opportunity to carry his plan into effect. The moment at length arrived. One of his fellow-prisoners, an ecclesiastic, was frequently visited by an abbé; and this circumstance he made the basis of his project. To succeed, it was necessary for him to elude the vigilance of two turnkeys, who guarded him when he walked, and of four sentinels, who watched the outer doors, and this was no easy matter. Of the turnkeys, one often waited in the garden, while the other went to fetch the prisoner. Latude began by accustoming the second turnkey to see him hurry down stairs, and join the first in the garden. When the day came on which he was determined to take flight, he, as usual, passed rapidly down the stairs without exciting any suspicion, his keeper having no doubt that he should find him in the garden. At the bottom was a door, which he hastily bolted to prevent the second turnkey from giving the alarm to his companion. Successful thus far, he knocked at the gate which led out of the castle. It was opened, and, with an appearance of much eagerness, he asked for the Abbé, and was answered that the sentinel had not seen him. "Our priest has been waiting for him in the garden more than two hours," exclaimed Latude; "I have been running after him in all directions to no purpose; but, egad, he shall pay me for my running!" He was allowed to pass; he repeated the same inquiry to the three other sentinels, received similar answers, and at last found himself beyond his prison walls. Avoiding as much as possible the high road, he traversed the fields and vineyards, and finally reached Paris, where he shut himself up in a retired lodging.

In the first moments of recovered liberty, the feelings of Latude were those of unmixed pleasure. They were, however, soon alloyed by doubt, apprehension, and anxiety. What was he to do? whither was he to fly? To remain concealed was impossible, and, even had it been possible, would have been only another kind of captivity: to fly from the kingdom was nearly, if not quite as difficult; and, besides, he was reluctant to give up the gaieties of the capital and his prospects of advancement. In this dilemma he romantically determined to throw himself upon the generosity of his persecutor. "I drew up," says he, "a memorial, which I addressed to the king. I spoke in it of Madame de Pompadour with respect, and on my fault towards her with repentance. I entreated she would be satisfied with the punishment I had undergone; or, if fourteen months' imprisonment had not expiated my offence, I ventured to implore the clemency of her I had offended, and threw myself on the mercy of my sovereign. I concluded my memorial by naming the asylum I had chosen." To use such language was, indeed, sounding "the very base-string of humility."

This appeal of the sheep to the wolf was answered in a wolf-like manner. Latude was arrested without delay, and immured in the Bastile. It was a part of the tactics of the prison to inspire hopes, for the purpose of adding the pain of disappointment to the other sufferings of a prisoner. He was accordingly told that he was taken into custody merely to ascertain by what means he had escaped. He gave a candid account of the stratagem to which he had resorted; but, instead of being set free, as he had foolishly expected, he was thrown into a dungeon, and subjected to the harshest treatment.

Again his compassionate friend, the lieutenant of police,

came to his relief. He could not release him from his dungeon, but did all that lay in his power to render it less wearisome. He condoled with him; tried, but in vain, to soften his tormentor; and, as a loop-hole in the vault admitted light enough to allow of reading, he ordered him to be supplied with books, pens, ink, and paper. For six months these resources enabled Latude to bear his fate with some degree of fortitude. His patience was then exhausted, and he gave way to rage and despair, in the paroxysms of which he vented his angry feelings in epigrams and satirical verses. One of these compositions, which is certainly not deficient in bitterness, he was imprudent enough to write on the margin of a book which had been lent to him—

"With no wit or allurements to tempt man to sin,
With no beauty and no virgin treasure in store,
In France you the highest of lovers may win—
For a proof do you ask? Then behold Pompadour."

Latude had taken the precaution to write this in a feigned hand; but he was not aware, that, whenever a prisoner returned a book, every page of it was carefully examined. The jailers discovered the epigram, and took the volume to John Lebel, the governor, who dutifully hastened to lay it before the mistress of the king. The fury of the marchioness was extreme. Sending for M. Berryer, she exclaimed to him, in a voice half smothered with passion, "See here! learn to know the man for whom you are so much interested, and dare again to solicit my clemency!"

Eighteen dreary months passed away, during which Latude was strictly confined to his dungeon, scarcely hearing the sound of a human voice. At last M. Berryer took upon himself the responsibility of removing him to a better apartment, and even allowing him to have the

attendance of a servant. A young man, named Cochar, was found willing to undertake the monotonous and soul-depressing task of being domestic to a prisoner. He was gentle and sympathising, and in so far was qualified for his office; but he had miscalculated his own strength, and the weight of the burden which he was to bear. He drooped, and in a short time he was stretched on the bed of mortal sickness. Fresh air and liberty might have saved him. Those, however, he could not obtain; for it was a rule that the fate of any one who entered into the service of a prisoner became linked with that of his master, and that he must not expect to quit the Bastile till his employer was set at large. It was not till Cochar was expiring, that the jailers would so much as consent to remove him from the chamber of Latude. Within three months from his entrance into the Bastile, he ceased to exist.

Latude was inconsolable for the loss of the poor youth, who had always endeavoured to comfort him, as long as he had spirits to do so. To mitigate his grief, M. Berryer obtained for him the society of a fellow-captive, who could scarcely fail to have a perfect communion of feeling with him. This new associate, D'Alegre by name, was about his own age, full of activity, spirit, and talent, and had committed the irremissible crime of offending the Marchioness de Pompadour. Taking it for granted that she was reclaimable, though on what ground he did so it would be difficult to discover, he had written to her a letter, in which he apprised her of the public hatred, and pointed out the means by which he thought she might remove it, and become an object of affection. For giving this advice, he had already spent three years within the walls of the Bastile. Yet his woes were now only beginning. The

unfortunate D'Alegre had ample cause to lament his having forgotten the scriptural injunction, not to cast pearls before swine.

M. Berryer took the same warm interest in D'Alegre as in Latude. He was indefatigable in his exertions to obtain their pardon, and for a while he flattered himself that he should succeed. At last, wearied by his importunity, the marchioness vowed that her vengeance should be eternal, and she commanded him never again to mention their names. He was, therefore, obliged to communicate to them the melancholy tidings, that their chains could be broken only by her disgrace or death.

D'Alegre was almost overwhelmed by the first shock of this intelligence; it inspired Latude, on the contrary, with a sort of insane energy, and his mind immediately began to revolve projects of escape. The very idea of escaping would seem to be indicative of madness; egress through the gates, tenfold guarded as they were, was utterly impossible, and to ascend to the summit of the lofty tower, which must be done through the grated chimney, then to descend from the dizzy height into the ditch, and, lastly, to break through or climb the outward wall appeared to be equally impracticable. Yet, with no apparent means of accomplishing his purpose, Latude firmly made up his mind to try the latter plan. He had two things in his favour, time and perseverance, and their sovereign efficacy has often been proved.

When Latude mentioned to him his scheme, D'Alegre considered it as little better than the ravings of delirium. Latude, however, continued to meditate deeply upon it, though in silence. The first step towards the execution of it, without the success of which no other could be taken, was to find a hiding-place for the tools and ma-

terials which must be employed. From his being unable to hear any of the movements of the prisoner in the chamber below, Latude concluded that there was a space between the floor of his room and the ceiling of his neighbour's and he immediately set himself to ascertain whether this was the fact. As he was returning with D'Alegre from mass, he contrived that his fellow-prisoner should drop his toothpick to the bottom of the stairs, and request the turnkey to pick it up. While the turnkey was descending, Latude looked into the under chamber, and estimated its height at about ten feet and a half. He then counted the number of stairs between the two rooms, measured one of them, and found, to his infiuite delight, that there must be a vacancy of five feet and a half between the bottom of the one room and the top of the other.

As soon as they were locked in, Latude embraced D'Alegre, and exclaimed that, with patience and courage, they might be saved, now that they had a spot where they could conceal their ropes and materials. At the mention of ropes, D'Alegre thought that his companion's wits were wandering; and when he heard him assert, that he had more than a thousand feet of rope in his trunk, he felt sure that the assertion was prompted by madness: "What!" said Latude, "have I not a vast quantity of linen*—thirteen dozen and a half of shirts—many napkins, stockings, nightcaps, and other articles? Will not these supply us? We will unravel them, and we shall have abundance of rope."

* This seems to be a quantity of linen so enormous as to stagger belief. But Latude is probably correct in his assertion. In some of the French provinces, families have an immense stock of linen; and it is necessary that they should, as the operation of washing is not performed more than twice or thrice a year.

D'Alegre began to have a gleam of hope, but he still started numerous difficulties, among which were the want of wood for ladders, and of tools to make them, and to wrench the iron gratings from the chimney. Latude silenced him by replying, "My friend, it is genius which creates, and we have that which despair supplies. It will direct our hands; and once more I tell you, we shall be saved."

Their first essay in tool-making was to grind down to an edge on the tiled floor two iron hooks, taken from a folding table; with these they meant to remove the chimney gratings. The next was to convert a part of the steel of their tinder-box into a knife, with which they made handles for the hooks. The hooks were immediately applied to raise the tiles, in order to find whether there was really a cavity beneath. After six hours' toil, the prisoners found that there was an empty space of about four feet, and having gained this satisfactory knowledge, they carefully replaced the floor of the cell. The threads of two shirts were then drawn out, one by one, tied together, wound into small balls, and, subsequently, formed into two larger balls, each composed of fifty threads, sixty feet in length. These were ultimately twisted into a rope, from which was made a ladder of twenty feet, intended to support the captives, while they extracted the bars by which the chimney was closed.

The removal of the bars was a work of horrible labour. Cramped into the most painful postures, it was impossible for them to work more than an hour at a stretch, and their hands were always covered with blood. The mortar was nearly as hard as iron—they had no means of softening it but by blowing water on it from their mouths; and they thought themselves lucky when

they could clear away as much as an eighth of an inch in the course of a night! As fast as the bars were extracted they replaced them, that their operations might not be betrayed. Six months' unremitting toil was bestowed upon this single object.

Having opened the passage up the chimney, they proceeded to construct their ladders. Their fuel, which was in logs of about eighteen or twenty inches long, supplied the rounds for the rope ladder, by which they were to descend from the tower; and the whole of that by which they were to scale the outer wall. More tools being required to cut the wood, Latude converted an iron candlestick into a saw, by notching it with the remaining half of the steel which belonged to the tinder-box. To this implement he afterwards added others. They then set to work on their wooden ladder, which it was necessary to make of the length of twenty or five-and-twenty feet. It had only one upright, three inches in diameter, through which the rounds passed, each round projecting six inches on either side: the pieces of which it consisted were joined by mortises and tenons, and each joint was fastened by two pegs to keep them perpendicular. As fast as the pieces were finished the rounds were tied to them with a string, that no mistake might occur when they were put together in the dark. They were then carefully hidden under the floor.

As in case of the prison spies chancing to overhear them talking about their employment, it was of consequence to prevent their enemies from understanding what was said, they invented a vocabulary of names for all the tools and the portions of the apparatus. For instance, the saw was *the monkey*, the reel *Anubis*, the hooks *Tubal Cain*, the wooden ladder *Jacob*, the rounds

sheep, the ropes *doves*, a ball of thread *the little brother*, and the knife *the puppy dog;* the hole in which they concealed them was christened *Polyphemus*.

It now remained for them to make their principal rope ladder. This was an arduous and almost endless task, as it was more than one hundred and eighty feet long, and, consequently, double that length of rope was wanted. "We began," says Latude, "by unravelling all our linen, shirts, towels, nightcaps, stockings, drawers, pocket-handkerchiefs,—everything which could supply thread or silk. When we had made a ball, we hid it in *Polyphemus;* and when we had a sufficient quantity, we employed a whole night in twisting it into a rope, and I defy the most skilful rope maker to have done it better."

There was still a pressing necessity for another enormous quantity of rope. Along the upper part of the outside of the Bastile ran a kind of cornice, which stood out three or four feet beyond the wall. The effect of this would be, to make the ladder hang loosely in the air, and vibrate in such a terrific manner, that there would be great danger of the captive who led the way being precipitated headlong to the ground. To avert this peril, they made a second rope, three hundred and sixty feet long, to be tied round the person first descending, and passed gradually through a sort of block fixed above, in order to steady him. Shorter ropes were also provided, to fasten the ladder to a cannon, and for any other occasion that might occur. On measuring the whole of their manufacture, they found that it extended to more than fourteen hundred feet. Two hundred and eight rounds were required for the ladders; and, lest their knocking against the wall should give the alarm, they covered them with the linings of their morning gowns,

waistcoats, and under waistcoats. These last preparations for flight occupied eighteen months!

It had originally been their intention, after having reached the ditch, to climb the parapet, and get into the governor's garden, and from thence descend into the moat at the gate of St. Antoine. On consideration, however, this plan was abandoned, because in this part they would be more exposed than elsewhere to be detected by the sentinels. It was, therefore, deemed advisable, though the labour would be greatly increased, to break a way through the wall which divided the ditch of the Bastile from that of the St. Antoine gate. Latude was of opinion that the mortar of the wall on this side, having been weakened by frequent floods, might be removed with comparative ease. Two bars of the chimney were to be used as levers to raise the stones, and an auger, to make holes for the insertion of the bars, was fabricated out of a screw from one of the bedsteads, to which a wooden cross handle was added.

All was now prepared for their flight, and they had only to decide upon the day for attempting their hazardous enterprise. The 25th of February, 1756, was the day which they chose. A portmanteau was filled with a change of clothes, the rounds were fastened into the rope ladder, the wooden ladder was got ready, the two crow-bars were put into cases to prevent them from clanging, and a bottle of brandy was prudently added to their baggage, to hearten them while they worked in the water—for the Seine had overflowed, and at that moment there was from four to five feet water in the moat of the Bastile, and ice was floating upon it.

Supper being over, and the turnkey having locked them in for the night, the captives, doubtless with throb-

bing hearts, began their operations. Latude was the first to ascend the chimney. "I had the rheumatism in my left arm," says he, "but I thought little of the pain, for I soon experienced one more severe." Before he reached the top, his knees and elbows were so excoriated, that the blood ran down from them. When he arrived at the summit, he let down a rope, by means of which he successively drew up the portmanteau, the ladders, and the other articles. The end of the rope ladder he allowed to hang down,and the upper part he fastened across the the funnel with a large wooden peg. D'Alegre was thus enabled to mount with less difficulty than his predecessor had experienced.

At last they breathed the free air of heaven on the platform of the Bastile. As the du Trésor tower appeared to be the most favourable for their descent, they carried their apparatus thither. One end of the rope ladder was made fast to a cannon, and it was gently let down. The safety rope was next passed through a firmly fixed block, and it was tied securely round the body of Latude. The daring adventurer now commenced his fearful descent of more than fifty yards; D'Alegre meanwhile slowly letting out the rope. It was well that they had taken this precaution; for, at every step that he took, Latude swung so violently in the air that it is probable he would have lost his hold, had not the safety rope given him confidence. In a few moments, which however must have seemed hours, he reached the ditch unhurt. The portmanteau and the other effects were then lowered to him, and he placed them on a spot to which the water had not risen. D'Alegre himself followed; and, as Latude applied all his strength to steady the ladder, the descent of his companion was effected with less annoyance and hazard than his own

had been. That regret at being unable to carry away their ladder and implements should have found a place among the feelings by which they were agitated, may at the first glance seem strange, but was certainly not unnatural: articles on which they had bestowed such persevering toil, which had proved the instruments of their deliverance, and were also the trophies of their triumph, they must have regarded with something like affection.

As they heard a sentinel pacing along at the distance of ten yards, they were obliged finally to relinquish the scheme of climbing the parapet, which they had still cherished a hope of carrying into execution. There was, therefore, no resource but to break a hole through the wall. Accordingly they crossed the ditch of the Bastile, to the spot where the wall separated it from that of the St. Antoine gate. Unluckily, the ditch had been deepened here, and the water, on which ice was floating, was up to their arm-pits. They, nevertheless, set to work with a vigour which can be inspired only by circumstances like those under which they were placed. Scarcely had they begun when, about twelve feet above their heads, they saw light cast upon them from the lantern which was carried by a patrol major; they were compelled instantly to put their heads under water, and this they had to do several times in the course of the night. The wall at which they were working had a thickness of a yard and a half; so that, although they plied their crowbars without intermission, they were nine mortal hours in making a hole of sufficient size for them to creep through. Their task was ultimately achieved, they passed through the aperture, and were now beyond the walls of their prison. But even at this moment of exultation, they had a narrow

escape from perishing. In their way to the road by which they were to go, there was an aqueduct; it was not more than six feet wide, but it had ten feet of water and two feet of mud. Into this they stumbled. Fortunately, Latude did not lose his upright position; having shaken off his companion, who had mechanically grasped him, he scrambled up the bank, and then drew out D'Alegre by the hair of his head.

The clock struck five as they entered the high road. After having joyously clasped each other in a long and close embrace, they dropped on their knees, and poured forth fervent thanks to the Divine Being, who had so miraculously aided them in their dangerous undertaking. In consequence of the evaporation which was taking place, they now began to feel more acutely than when they were in the water the effects of their immersion; their whole frame was rapidly becoming rigid. They, therefore, drew a change of clothes from the portmanteau; but they were so much benumbed and exhausted, that neither of them could dress without being assisted by his friend. When they were somewhat recovered, they took a hackney-coach, and eventually found shelter in the house of a kind-hearted tailor, a native of Languedoc, who was known to Latude.

To gain strength after their toils, as well as to let the hue and cry die away, the friends remained nearly a month in concealment. It having been settled between them that, in order to avoid being both caught at once, they should quit the country separately, D'Alegre, in the disguise of a peasant, set out on his journey to Brussels. He reached that city in safety, and informed Latude of his success. Furnished with a parish register of his host, who was nearly of his own age, and with some old papers relative to a lawsuit, and dressed as a servant,

Latude departed. He went on foot a few leagues from Paris, and then took the diligence for Valenciennes. He was several times stopped, searched, and questioned, and, on one occasion, was in imminent danger of being detected. By dint, however, of sticking to his story, that he was carrying law papers to his master's brother at Amsterdam, he got safely to Valenciennes, at which town he removed into the stage for Brussels. He was walking when they reached the boundary post which marks the frontier line of France and the Netherlands. "My feelings," says he, "got the better of my prudence; I threw myself on the ground, and kissed it with transport. At length, thought I, I can breathe without fear! My companions, with astonishment, demanded the cause of this extravagance. I pretended that, just at the very moment, in a preceding year, I had escaped a great danger, and that I always expressed my gratitude to Providence by a similar prostration when the day came round."

Latude had appointed D'Alegre to meet him at the Hotel de Coffi, in Brussels. Thither he went immediately on his arrival; but there disappointment and sorrow awaited him. The landlord at first denied any knowledge of D'Alegre; and, when further pressed he hesitated, and became extremely embarrassed. This was enough to convince the inquirer that his friend had been seized; and the conviction was strengthened, by his having heard nothing from him, though D'Alegre knew the moment when his companion would reach Brussels. As his friend could be arrested on the Austrian territory, it was obvious that Latude could not remain in it without danger; and, with a heavy heart, he resolved to fly instantly from this inhospitable soil. He secured a place in the canal boat,

which was that night to proceed to Antwerp. In the course of the voyage, he learned the fatal truth from a fellow-passenger. He was told, that one of the two prisoners, escaped from the Bastile, had arrived at the Hotel de Coffi, had been apprehended by a police officer, and had been ultimately sent under a strong escort to Lille, and there delivered into the custody of a French exempt; and, moreover, that all this was kept as secret as possible, in order not to alarm the other fugitive, the search after whom was carried on with such activity that he must inevitably fall into the hands of his pursuers.

Believing that if he went on immediately to Amsterdam he would find there an officer of the police waiting to seize him, he directed his steps to Bergen-op-Zoom. But now another trouble fell upon him. He had nearly exhausted his scanty stock of money, and had not found at Brussels a remittance which he expected from his father: he afterwards learned that it had been intercepted by the French exempt, who was employed to trace him. While he remained at Bergen-op-Zoom, which was till he supposed that his enemies would have lost the hope of his coming to Amsterdam, he wrote to his father for a supply. But a considerable time must elapse before he could receive it; and, in the meanwhile, he would run the risk of starving. When he had paid the rent of his wretched garret at Bergen-op-Zoom, and the fare of the boat which was to convey him to Amsterdam, a few shillings was all that was left. In this state of penury, unwilling to beg, he tried whether life could be supported by grass and wild herbs alone. The experiment failed, for his stomach rejected the loathsome food. To render his herbs less disgusting, he bought four pounds of a black and clay-like rye bread, to eat with them.

Hoping that by this time the bloodhounds of the marchioness had desisted from seeking him in the Dutch capital, Latude ventured to embark. To hide his poverty, he kept aloof as much as possible from his fellow-voyagers. He was, however, not unobserved. There was in the boat one John Teerhorst, who kept a sort of humble public-house, in a cellar at Amsterdam. Under his unprepossessing exterior, he had a heart as kind as ever beat in a human breast. Chancing to catch a sight of Latude's sorry fare, he could not help exclaiming, "Good God! what an extraordinary dinner you are making! You seem to have more appetite than money!" Latude frankly owned that it was so. The good-natured Dutchman immediately led him to his own table. "No compliments, Mr. Frenchman," said he, "seat yourself there, and eat and drink with me." On further acquaintance with him, Latude discovered that his host was not only a truly benevolent man, but that he had also the rare talent of conferring favours with such delicacy as not to wound the feelings of the person whom he obliged.

When they reached Amsterdam, Teerhorst offered to introduce him to a Frenchman named Martin, who, judging from himself, he doubted not would be delighted to serve him. Latude, however, found that his fellow-countryman was one of the most soulless animals whom he had ever seen; a being who cared only for self. He was better fitted to be a turnkey of the Bastile than the consoler of one of its victims. The tears and low spirits of his guest disclosed to the Dutchman the reception which Latude had met with, and the forebodings that oppressed him. Taking his hand, he said, "Do not weep—I will never abandon you: I am not rich, it is

true, but my heart is good; we will do the best we can for you, and you will be satisfied."

Teerhorst's underground habitation was divided by a partition into two rooms; one of which served as kitchen, while the other was at once shop, sitting-room, and bed-room. Though the narrow tenement was already crowded, Teerhorst contrived to make a sleeping place for Latude in a large closet; and he and his wife cheerfully gave him a mattress from their own bed. Not content with feeding and lodging the fugitive, Teerhorst strove to divert him from melancholy thoughts, by taking him wherever there was anything that could amuse him. His charitable efforts were but partially successful; for the mind of Latude was deeply begloomed by his own precarious situation, and still more by his incessantly brooding over and regretting the fate of D'Alegre.

Though Latude had found no sympathy in Martin, he was more fortunate in another of his countrymen, Louis Clergue, who was a native of Martagnac, where the fugitive was born. Rich and compassionate, Clergue gave him a room in his house, made him a constant partaker of his table, and furnished him with clothes and linen. The linen was not the least acceptable of these gifts; for Latude had been forty days without a change of it. Clergue also assembled his friends, to hear the story of his guest, and to consult what could be done for him. They were all of opinion that Latude had nothing to fear, as neither the states-general nor the people of Amsterdam would ever consent to deliver up a persecuted stranger, who had confidingly thrown himself on their protection. Even Latude himself began to believe that at last he was safe.

The unfortunate man was soon woefully undeceived.

Not for a moment had his pursuers slackened in the chase, not a single precaution had they neglected that could lead to success. In aid of the subaltern agents, the French ambassador had also exerted himself. By representing the fugitive as a desperate malefactor, he had obtained the consent of the States to arrest him. Calumny was one of the weapons uniformly employed against prisoners, in order to insulate them from their fellow-creatures, by extinguishing pity. But, in this instance, there seems reason for believing that bribery was an auxiliary to calumny: the expense of following up the fugitives was no less than 9000*l.* sterling—a sum for which it is impossible to account, without supposing that much of it was expended in bribes.

Though Latude had changed his name and the address to which his friends were to direct their communications, the active agents of the marchioness had succeeded in intercepting all his letters. One was at last allowed to reach him, as the means of effecting his ruin. It does not appear whether his residing in the house of M. Clergue was known to them—probably it was; but, if it were, they perhaps thought that it would be imprudent to seize him there, as his protector might proclaim to the populace the innocence of his guest, and thus excite a tumult. A letter from Latude's father, containing a draft on a banker, was therefore forwarded to him. Into this snare he fell. As he was proceeding to the banker's, the Dutch police officers pounced upon him, and he was immediately fettered and dragged along. The crowd which had by this time gathered, was told that he was a dangerous criminal; but, as the numbers nevertheless continued to increase, the brutal officers, who were armed with heavy bludgeons, dealt their blows liberally on all

sides, to clear their way to the town-hall. One of these blows struck the prisoner with such violence on the nape of his neck, that he dropped senseless to the ground.

When consciousness returned, he was lying on a truss of straw in a dungeon; there was not a ray of light visible, not a sound to be heard. He seemed to be cut off from the human race, and he resigned himself wholly to despair. His tumultuous reflections were interrupted in the morning by a visit from St. Marc, the French exempt, who had pursued him from Paris. This brutal caitiff had the baseness to aggravate his sufferings by an awkward attempt at irony. "He told me," says Latude, "that I ought to pronounce the name of the Marchioness de Pompadour with the most profound respect—she was anxious only to load me with favours: far from complaining, I ought to kiss the generous hand that struck me, every blow from which was a compliment and an obligation." In a second visit, some time after, the exempt brought him an ounce of snuff, which he strongly recommended, but which Latude did not use, because he imagined, and not unreasonably, that it was poisoned.

Latude remained nine days in this dungeon, while his captors were waiting for permission to carry him through the territory of the Empress Maria Theresa. They were anxious to receive it without delay, for M. Clergue and the other friends of the prisoner were loudly asserting his innocence, and the citizens began to murmur at the disgrace which was cast upon their country by his seizure being permitted. The permission soon came, and the myrmidons of the marchioness hastened to bear off their prey.

In this instance, the Dutch and Austrian governments

must bear the shame of having been ready instruments of the persecutors. It is, however, doubtful whether, had those governments acted otherwise, the fugitives would have escaped. To effect their purpose, the emissaries of the Bastile did not scruple to violate the territory of foreign powers. In 1752, a M. Bertin de Fretaux was carried off from England. He was secretly seized at Marylebone, put on board ship at Gravesend, and conveyed to the Bastile, where he died after having been confined for twenty-seven years. Even foreign subjects were not safe. The publisher of a Leyden Gazette having printed a satire on Louis XIV., he was kidnapped in Holland, and conveyed to the rock of St. Michael, on the Norman coast, and shut up in a cage till he died.

At two in the morning, on the 9th of June, 1756, the jailers of Latude came to remove him. Round his body they fastened a strong leathern belt, on which were two large rings fastened by padlocks. Through these rings his hands were passed; so that his arms were pinioned down to his sides, without the power of motion. He was then conveyed to a boat, into the foulest corner of which he was thrown. As he could not feed himself, the office of feeding him was committed to two men; they were so horribly filthy that he refused for four-and-twenty hours to take nourishment from them. Force was then employed to make him eat. "They brought me," says Latude, "a piece of beef swimming in gravy; they took the meat in their hands, and thrust it into my mouth; they then took some bread, which they steeped in the grease, and made me swallow it in a similar manner. During this disgusting operation, one of these ruffians blew his nose with his fingers, and, without wiping them, soaked some bread, and approached it to my mouth. I turned my head aside,

but it was too late. I had seen these preliminaries, and my stomach revolted. The consequence was, a long and severe fit of vomiting, which left me almost without strength or motion."

The mode of confinement by the belt was absolute torture to the prisoner. At length, thanks to the compassionate interference of a servant on board, who declared that, if no one else would, he himself would cut it, the belt was removed, and Latude was indulged, by being only handcuffed on the right arm, and chained to one of his guards. When they arrived at Lille, St. Marc halted for the night and sent the prisoner to the town jail, where he was bolted to the chain of a deserter, scarcely nineteen, who had been told that he was to be hanged on the morrow. The despairing youth spent the night in trying to convince him, that he, too, would be hanged, and in proposing that they should elude a public execution by strangling themselves with their shirts. For the remainder of the journey Latude, with his legs ironed, travelled in a carriage with St. Marc, who took the precaution of carrying pistols, and had likewise an armed servant by the side of the vehicle, whose orders were to shoot the captive if he made the slightest motion.

By his associates at the Bastile, St. Marc was received like some victor returning from the scene of his triumph. They swarmed round him, listened with greedy ears to the tale of his exertions and stratagems, and lavished praises and attentions upon him. The group must have borne no very distant resemblance to fiends exulting over a lost soul.

Stripped, and reclothed in rags which were dropping to pieces, his hands and feet heavily ironed, the prisoner was thrown into one of the most noisome dungeons of the

fortress. A sprinkling of straw formed his bed; covering it had none. The only light and air which penetrated into this den of torment came through a loop-hole, which narrowing gradually from the inside to the outside, had a diameter of not more than five inches at the furthest extremity. This loop-hole was secured and darkened by a fourfold iron grating, so ingeniously contrived that the bars of one net-work covered the interstices of another; but there was neither glass nor shutters to ward off the inclemency of the weather. The interior extremity of this aperture reached within about two feet and a half of the ground, and served the captive for a chair and a table, and sometimes he rested his arms and elbows on it to lighten the weight of his fetters.

Shut out from all communication with his fellow-beings, Latude found some amusement in the society of the rats which infested his dungeon. His first attempt to make them companionable was tried upon a single rat, which in three days, by gently throwing bits of bread to it, he rendered so tame that it would take food from his hands. The animal even changed its abode, and established itself in another hole in order to be nearer to him. In a few days a female joined the first comer. At the outset she was timid; but it was not long before she acquired boldness, and would quarrel and fight for the morsels which were given by the prisoner.

"When my dinner was brought in (says Latude) I called my companions: the male ran to me directly; the female, according to custom, came slowly and timidly, but at length approached close to me, and ventured to take what I offered her from my hand. Some time after, a third appeared who was much less ceremonious than my first acquaintances. After his second visit, he constituted

himself one of the family, and made himself so perfectly at home, that he resolved to introduce his comrades. The next day, he came accompanied by two others, who in the course of the week brought five more; and thus, in less than a fortnight, our family circle consisted of ten large rats and myself. I gave each of them names, which they learned to distinguish. When I called them they came to eat with me, from the dish, or off the same plate; but I found this unpleasant, and was soon forced to find them a dish for themselves, on account of their slovenly habits. They became so tame that they allowed me to scratch their necks, and appeared pleased when I did; but they would never permit me to touch them on the back. Sometimes I amused myself with making them play, and joining in their gambols. Occasionally I threw them a piece of meat scalding hot: the most eager ran to seize it, burned themselves, cried out, and left it; while the less greedy, who had waited patiently, took it when it was cold, and escaped into a corner, where they divided their prize: sometimes I made them jump up, by holding a piece of bread or meat suspended in the air." In the course of the year, his four-footed companions increased to twenty-six. Whenever an intruder appeared he met with a hostile reception from the old standers, and had to fight his way before he could obtain a footing. Latude endeavoured to familiarise a spider, but in this he was unsuccessful.

Another source of comfort was unexpectedly opened to the solitary captive. Among the straw which was brought for his bed, he found a piece of elder, and he conceived the idea of converting it into a sort of flageolet. This, however, was a task of no easy accomplishment, for his hands were fettered, and he had no tools. But

necessity is proverbially inventive. He succeeded in getting off the buckle which fastened the waistband of his breeches, and bending it into a kind of chisel by means of his leg irons; and, with this clumsy instrument, after the labour of many months, he contrived to form a rude kind of musical pipe. It was probably much inferior to a child's whistle, but his delight when he had completed it was extreme; the feeling was natural, and the sounds must have been absolute harmony to his ear.

Though his flageolet made his lonely hours somewhat less burthensome, and at moments drew his attention wholly from maddening thoughts, the longing for liberty would perpetually recur, and he racked his mind for plans to shake off his chains. The thought occurred to him, that if he could be fortunate enough to suggest some plan which would benefit the state, it might be repaid by the gift of freedom. At that time the non-commissioned military officers were armed only with halberts, which could be of no use but in close engagement; Latude proposed to substitute muskets for the halberts, and thus make effective at least 20,000 men. But how was he to communicate his idea to the king and the ministers? he had neither pen, ink, nor paper, and strict orders had been given that he should be debarred from the use of them. This obstacle, however, he got over. For paper, he moulded thin tablets of bread, six inches square; for pens he used the triangular bones out of a carp's belly; for ink his blood was substituted—to obtain it he tied round a finger some threads from his shirt, and punctured the end. As only a few drops could be procured in this way, and as they dried up rapidly, he was compelled to repeat the operation so often, that his fingers were covered with wounds, and enormously swelled. The necessity of

frequent punctures he ultimately obviated, by diluting the blood with water.

When the memorial was finished, there was yet another difficulty to be surmounted; it must be copied. In this emergency, Latude clamorously demanded to see the major of the Bastile. To that officer he declared that, being convinced he had not long to live, he wished to prepare for his end by receiving religious assistance. The confessor of the prison was in consequence sent to him, was astonished and delighted by the memorial, became interested in his favour, and obtained an order that he should be supplied with materials for writing. The memorial was accordingly transcribed, and presented to the king.

The suggestion was adopted by the government; the unfortunate prisoner was, however, left to languish unnoticed in his dungeon. Again he tasked his faculties for a project which might benefit at once his country and himself. At this period no provision was made in France for the widows of those who fell in battle. The King of Prussia had recently set the example of granting pensions; and Latude deemed it worthy of being imitated. But, knowing that an empty treasury would be pleaded in bar, he proposed a trifling addition to the postage of letters, which he calculated would raise an ample fund. His memorial and the data on which it was founded, were forwarded to the monarch and the ministers. The tax was soon after imposed, and nominally for the purpose pointed out by Latude; but the widows, nevertheless, continued to be destitute, and the projector unpitied.

Foiled in all his efforts, the firmness of Latude gave way. He had been pent for three years and five months

in a loathsome dungeon, suffering more than pen can describe. Exposed in his horrible fireless and windowless abode to all the blasts of heaven, three winters, one of which was peculiarly severe, had sorely tortured his frame. The cold, the keen winds, and a continual defluxion from his nostrils, had split his upper lip, and destroyed his front teeth; his eyes were endangered from the same causes, and from frequent weeping; his head was often suddenly affected by a sort of apoplectic stroke; and his limbs were racked by cramp and rheumatism. Hope was extinct; intense agony of mind and body rendered existence insufferable; and the unhappy victim resolved to throw off a burthen which he could no longer bear. No instrument of destruction being within reach, he tried to effect his purpose by starving himself; and for a hundred and thirty-three hours he obstinately persisted in refusing all food. At last, his jailors wrenched open his mouth, and frustrated his design. Still bent on dying, he contrived to obtain and secrete a fragment of broken glass, with which he opened four of the large veins. During the night he bled till life was all but extinct. Once more, however, he was snatched from the grave, and he now sullenly resigned himself to await his appointed time.

After he had been confined a considerable time longer, a fortunate overflowing of the Seine occasioned his removal. The turnkey complained heavily that he was obliged to walk through the water to the prisoner, and Latude was in consequence removed to an apartment in the tower of La Comté. It had no chimney, and was one of the worst rooms in the tower, but it was a paradise when compared with the pestiferous hole from which he had emerged. Yet, so strong is the yearning for

society, that, gladdened as he was by his removal, he could not help bitterly regretting the loss of his sociable rats. As a substitute for them, he tried to catch some of the pigeons which perched on the window; and, by means of a noose, formed from threads drawn out of his linen, he finally succeeded in snaring a male and a female. "I tried," says he, "every means to console them for the loss of liberty. I assisted them to make their nest and to feed their young: my cares and attention equalled their own. They seemed sensible of this, and repaid me by every possible mark of affection. As soon as we had established this reciprocal understanding, I occupied myself entirely with them. How I watched their actions, and enjoyed their expressions of tenderness! I lost myself entirely while with them, and in my dreams continued the enjoyment."

This pleasure was too great to be lasting. He had been placed in his present apartment because it was under the care of a brutal turnkey, named Daragon, who had been punished for Latude's former escape, and cherished a rankling feeling of revenge. It was Daragon who purchased the grain for the pigeons, and for this service the prisoner, besides the large profit which the turnkey made, gave him one out of the seven bottles of wine which was his weekly allowance. Daragon now insisted on having four bottles, without which he would purchase no more grain. It was to no purpose that Latude pleaded that the wine was indispensably necessary to restore his health; the turnkey was deaf to reason. Latude was provoked into asperity; Daragon rushed out in a rage; and in a short time he returned, pretending that he had an order from the governor to kill the pigeons. "My despair at this," says Latude, "exceeded

all bounds, and absolutely unsettled my reason: I could willingly have sacrificed my life to satisfy my just vengeance on this monster. I saw him make a motion towards the innocent victims of my misfortunes; I sprang forward to prevent him. I seized them, and, in my agony, I crushed them myself. This was perhaps the most miserable moment of my whole existence. I never recall the memory of it without the bitterest pangs. I remained several days without taking any nourishment—grief and indignation divided my soul: my sighs were imprecations, and I held all mankind in mortal horror."

Fortunately, a humane and generous man, the Count de Jumilhac, was soon after appointed governor of the Bastile. He compassionated the sufferings of Latude, and exerted himself to relieve them. He obtained for him an interview with M. de Sartine, the minister of police, who gave him leave to walk for two hours daily on the platform of the Bastile, and promised to befriend him. That promise he soon broke. Hope revived in the breast of Latude, and he again set to work to form plans for the good of the country. Schemes for issuing a new species of currency, and for establishing public granaries in all the principal towns, were among the first fruits of his meditations. With respect to the latter project he says, "Nothing could be more simple than the mode I suggested of constructing and provisioning these magazines. It consisted in a slight duty upon marriage, which all rich people, or those who wished to appear so, would have paid with eagerness, as I had the address to found it upon their vanity." This project pleased M. de Sartine so much that he wished to have the merit of it to himself; and, by means of a third person, he sounded Latude, to know whether he would relinquish his claim to it on

having a small pension secured to him. Latude gave a brief but peremptory refusal, and M. de Sartine was thenceforth his enemy. All letters and messages to him remained unnoticed.

While he was one day walking on the platform, he learned the death of his father. The sentinel who guarded him had served under his father, but did not know that the prisoner was the son of his old officer. Latude was overwhelmed by this fatal intelligence, and he fainted on the spot. His mother still lived; but she, too, was sinking into the grave from grief. It was in vain that, in the most pathetic language, she repeatedly implored the harlot marchioness to have mercy on the captive. Her prayers might have moved a heart of flint, but they had no effect on Madame de Pompadour. But the horrors of imprisonment were not enough to be inflicted on him; he was made the victim of calumny, and a stain was fixed upon his character. To get rid of importunity in his behalf, the men in office replied to his advocates:—"Beware how you solicit the pardon of that miscreant. You would shudder if you knew the crimes he has committed."

Thus goaded almost to madness, it is not to be wondered at that he was eager to take vengeance on his persecutors. Since the heart of Madame de Pompadour was inaccessible to pity, he determined that it should at least feel the stings of mortification and rage. His plan was, to draw up a memorial exposing her character, and to address it to La Beaumelle, who had himself tasted the rigours of the Bastile. "I had only," says he, "to place in trusty hands the true history of her birth and infamous life, with all the particulars of which I was well acquainted: in depriving me of existence, she would dread my dying words, and even from the tomb I should still be an object

of terror to her. There was nothing then to restrain the blow with which I had the power of crushing her. The faithful friends who were to become the depositaries of my vengeance, in apprising her of the danger, would merely give her a single moment to escape it by doing me justice."

It was while he was walking on the platform of the Bastile that he formed this chimerical project, for chimerical it was, there being scarcely a probability that any one would have courage enough to second his attack on the potent and vindictive marchioness. Having calculated the distance between the top of the tower and the street of St. Anthony, on which he looked down, he perceived that it was possible to fling a packet into the street. Nothing of this kind could, however, be done while he was closely watched by Falconet the aid-major, and a serjeant, both of whom always attended him in his walk. Falconet was insufferably garrulous, particularly on his own exploits, and Latude hoped to disgust him by perpetual sarcasm and contradiction. He succeeded in silencing him, but Falconet still clung to him like his shadow. To tire him out, Latude adopted the plan of almost running during the whole of the time that he was on the platform. The aid-major remonstrated, but the prisoner answered, that rapid motion was indispensably necessary to him, in order to excite perspiration. At last, Falconet suffered him to move about as he pleased, and fell into gossiping with the sergeant, in which they both engaged so deeply that Latude was left unnoticed.

The next step of Latude was to gaze into the windows of the opposite houses, and scrutinise the faces of the persons whom he saw, till he could see some one whose countenance seemed indicative of humane feelings. It was on the

female sex, as having more sensibility than the male, that he mainly relied for pity and succour; and his attention was finally fixed on two young women, who were sitting by themselves at work in a chamber, and whose looks appeared to betoken that they were of kind dispositions. Having caught the eye of one of them, he respectfully saluted her by a motion of his hand; the sign was answered by both of them in a similar manner. After this dumb intercourse had continued for some days, he showed them a packet, and they motioned to him to fling it; but he gave them to understand that it was not yet ready.

The means of conveyance for his intended work were now secured, but as he no longer had materials for writing, he had still much to contrive. But he was not of a nature to be discouraged even by serious obstacles. He had fortunately been allowed to purchase some books, and he resolved to write between the lines and on the margins of the pages. As a pen made of a carp bone would not write a sufficiently small hand for interlineations, he beat a halfpenny as thin as paper, and succeeded in shaping it into a tolerable pen. Ink was yet to be provided, and this was the worst task of all to accomplish. Having on the former occasion narrowly escaped gangrene in his fingers, he was afraid to use blood, and was therefore compelled to find a substitute. To make his ink of lamp-black was the mode which occurred to him; but as he was allowed neither fire nor candle. how was the black to be obtained? By a series of stratagems he managed to surmount the difficulty. Under pretence of severe tooth-ache, he borrowed from the serjeant, who attended him on the platform, a pipe and the articles for lighting it, and he secreted a piece of the tinder. By a simulated fit of colic, he got some oil from the doctor. This he put

into a pomatum pot, and made a wick from threads drawn out of the sheets. He then made a bow and peg, like a drill, and with this and the piece of tinder, by dint of rapid friction, he ignited two small bits of dry wood, and lighted his lamp. The first view of the light threw him, he says, into a delirium of joy. The condensed smoke he collected on the bottom of a plate, and in six hours he had sufficient for his purpose. But here he was stopped short, and all his trouble seemed likely to be thrown away; for the light and oily black floated on the water instead of mixing with it. He got over this by affecting to have a violent cold. The prison apothecary sent him some syrup, and Latude employed it to render the lamp-black miscible with water.

Thus provided with materials for writing, Latude sat down to compose his work. "My whole heart and soul were in it," says he, "and I steeped my pen in the gall with which they were overflowing." Having completed the history of his persecutor, he wrote a letter of instructions to La Beaumelle; another to a friend, the Chevalier de Mehegan, in case of La Beaumelle being absent; and a third to his two female friends, in which he directed them how to proceed, and entreated them to exert themselves in his behalf. The whole of the papers he packed up in a leathern bag, which he formed out of the lining of a pair of breeches. As the packet was rather bulky, and the carrying it about his person was dangerous, he was anxious to get rid of it as soon as possible. Some time, however, elapsed before he could catch sight of his friendly neighbours. At length one of them saw his signal, descended into the street, and caught the packet. Three months and a half passed away, during which he frequently saw them, and they seemed to be

pleased with something that related to him, but he was unable to comprehend their signs. At last, on the 18th of April, 1764, they approached the window, and displayed a roll of paper, on which was written in large characters, "The Marchioness of Pompadour died yesterday."

"I thought I saw the heavens open before me!" exclaimed Latude. His oppressor was gone, and he felt an undoubting confidence that his liberation would immediately follow as a necessary consequence. He was soon cruelly undeceived. After some days had passed over, he wrote to the lieutenant of police, and claimed his freedom. Sartine had given strict orders to all the officers of the Bastile to conceal the death of the marchioness, and he instantly hurried to the prison, to discover how the news had reached Latude. He summoned the prisoner into his presence, and harshly questioned him on the subject. Latude perceived that a disclosure might be prejudicial to the kind females, and, with equal firmness and honour, he refused to make it. "The avowal," said Sartine, "is the price of your liberty." The captive, however, again declared that he would rather perish than purchase the blessing at such a cost. Finding him inflexible, the baffled lieutenant of police retired in anger. Irritated by repeated letters, petitions, and remonstrances being neglected, and having been led to fear that he was to be perpetually imprisoned, to prevent him from suing Pompadour's heirs, Latude in an evil hour lost all command over himself, and wrote a violent epistle to Sartine, avowedly for the purpose of enraging him. This act of insane passion was punished by instant removal to one of the worst dungeons, where his fare was bread and water.

After Latude had been for eighteen days in the dungeon,

M. de Sartine obtained an order to transfer him to Vincennes, and immure him in an oubliette. Before he removed the prisoner, he circulated a report "that he meant to deliver him, but that, to accustom him by degrees to a change of air, he was going to place him for a few months in a convent of monks." On the night of the 14th of August, 1764, an officer of police, with two assistants, came to convey him to his new prison. "My keepers," says he, "fastened an iron chain round my neck, the end of which they placed under the bend of my knees; one of them placed one hand upon my mouth, and the other behind my head, whilst his companion pulled the chain with all his might, and completely bent me double. The pain I suffered was so intense that I thought my loins and spine were crushed; I have no doubt it equalled that endured by the wretch who is broken on the wheel. In this state I was conveyed from the Bastile to Vincennes."

At Vincennes he was placed in a cell. His mind and body were now both overpowered by the severity of his fate, dangerous illness came on, and he every day grew weaker. Fortunately for Latude, M. Guyonnet, the governor of the fortress, had nothing of "the steeled jailer" about him; he was a generous, humane man, of amiable manners. He listened to the mournful tale of the captive, wept for his misfortunes, took on himself the responsibility of giving him a good apartment, and obtained for him the privilege of walking daily for two hours in the garden.

Despairing, as well he might, of being ever released by his inflexible enemies, Latude meditated incessantly on the means of escaping. Fifteen months elapsed before an opportunity occurred, and then it was brought about by

chance. He was walking in the garden, on a November afternoon, when a thick fog suddenly came on. The idea of turning it to account rushed into his mind. He was guarded by two sentries and a serjeant, who never quitted his side for an instant; but he determined to make a bold attempt. By a violent push of his elbows he threw off the sentries, then pushed down the serjeant, and darted past a third sentry, who did not perceive him till he was gone by. All four set up the cry of "Seize him!" and Latude joined in it still more loudly, pointing with his finger, to mislead the pursuers. There remained only one sentry to elude, but he was on the alert, and unfortunately knew him. Presenting his bayonet, he threatened to kill the prisoner if he did not stop. "My dear Chenu," said I to him, "you are incapable of such an action; your orders are to arrest, and not to kill me. I had slackened my pace, and came up to him slowly; as soon as I was close to him, I sprang upon his musket, I wrenched it from him with such violence that he was thrown down in the struggle; I jumped over his body, flinging the musket to a distance of ten paces, lest he should fire it after me, and once more I achieved my liberty."

Favoured by the fog, Latude contrived to hide himself in the park till night, when he scaled the wall, and proceeded, by by-ways, to Paris. He sought a refuge with the two kind females to whom he had entrusted his packet. They were the daughters of a hair-dresser named Lebrun. The asylum for which he asked was granted in the kindest manner. They procured for him some linen, and an apartment in the house, gave him fifteen livres which they had saved, and supplied him with food from all their own meals. The papers confided to them they had endeavoured, but in vain, to deliver to the persons for whom

they were intended; two of those persons were absent from France; the third was recently married, and his wife, on hearing that the packet was from the Bastile, would not suffer her husband to receive it.

Latude was out of prison, but he was not out of danger. He was convinced that, to whatever quarter he might bend his steps, it would be next to impossible to elude M. de Sartine, who, by means of his spies, was omnipresent. In this emergency, he deemed it prudent to conciliate his persecutor; and he accordingly wrote a letter to him, entreating forgiveness for insults offered in a moment of madness, promising future silence and submission, and pathetically imploring him to become his protector. This overture had no result. He tried the influence of various persons, among whom was the Prince of Conti, but everywhere he was met by the prejudice which Sartine had raised against him; and, to add to his alarm and vexation, he learned that a strict search was making for him, and that a reward of a thousand crowns was offered for his apprehension.

As a last resource, he determined to make a personal appeal to the Duke of Choiseul, the first minister, who was then with the court at Fontainebleau. It was mid-December, when he set out, the ground was covered with ice and snow, and the cold was intense. A morsel of bread was his whole stock of provisions, he had no money, and he dared not approach a house, proceed on the high road, or travel by day, lest he should be intercepted. In his nightly circuitous journey, of more than forty miles, he often fell into ditches, or tore himself in scrambling through the hedges. "I hid myself in a field," says he, "during the whole of the 16th; and, after walking for two successive nights, I arrived on the morning of the

17th at Fontainebleau, worn out by fatigue, hunger, grief, and despair."

Latude was too soon convinced that there was no chance of escaping from the vengeance of M. de Sartine. As soon as he had announced his arrival to the duke, two officers of the police came to convey him, as they said, to the minister; but their mask was speedily thrown off, and he found that they were to escort him back to Vincennes. They told him that every road had been beset, and every vehicle watched, to discover him, and they expressed their wonder at his having been able to reach Fontainebleau undetected. "I now learned," says he, "for the first time, that there was no crime so great, or so severely punished, as a complaint against a minister. These exempts quoted to me the case of some deputies from the provinces, who, having been sent a short time before to denounce to the king the exactions of certain intendants, had been arrested and punished as dangerous incendiaries!

On his reaching Vincennes, he was thrown into a horrible dungeon, barely six feet by six and a half in diameter, which was secured by four iron-plated, treble-bolted doors, distant a foot from each other. To aggravate his misery, he was told that he deserved a thousand times worse treatment; for that he had been the cause of the serjeant who guarded him being hanged. This appalling news entirely overwhelmed him; he gave himself up to frantic despair, and incessantly accused himself as the murderer of the unfortunate man. In the course of a few days, however, a compassionate sentinel, who was moved by his groans, relieved his heart, by informing him that the serjeant was well, and had only been imprisoned.

The kind-hearted governor sometimes visited Latude,

but the information which he brought was not consolatory. He had tried to move M. de Sartine, and had found him inflexible. Sartine, however, sent to offer the prisoner his liberty, on condition that he would name the person who held his papers, and he pledged his honour that no harm should come to that person. Latude knew him too well to trust him. He resolutely answered, "I entered my dungeon an honest man, and I will die rather than leave it a dastard and a knave."

Into the den, where he was as it were walled up, no ray of light entered; the air was never changed but at the moment when the turnkey opened the wicket; the straw on which he lay was always rotten with damp, and the narrowness of the space scarcely allowed him room to move. His health of course rapidly declined, and his body swelled enormously, retaining in every part of it, when touched, the impression of the finger. Such were his agonies that he implored his keepers, as an act of mercy, to terminate his existence. At last, after having endured months of intense suffering, he was removed to a habitable apartment, where his strength gradually returned.

Though his situation was improved, he was still entirely secluded from society. Hopeless of escape, he pondered on the means of at least opening an intercourse with his fellow-prisoners. On the outer side of his chamber was the garden, in which each of the prisoners, Latude alone being excluded, was daily allowed to walk by himself for a certain time. This wall was five feet thick; so that to penetrate it seemed almost as difficult as to escape. But what cannot time and perseverance accomplish? His only instruments were a broken piece of a sword and an iron hoop of a bucket, which he had

contrived to secrete; yet with these, by dint of twenty-six months' labour, he managed to perforate the mass of stone. The whole was made in a dark corner of the chimney, and he stopped the interior opening with a plug, formed of sand and plaster. A long wooden peg, rather shorter than the hole, was inserted into it, that, in case of the external opening being noticed and sounded, it might seem to be not more than three inches in depth.

For a signal to the prisoner walking in the garden, he tied several pieces of wood so as to form a stick about six feet long, at the end of which hung a bit of riband. The twine with which it was tied was made from threads drawn out of his linen. He thrust the stick through the hole, and succeeded in attracting the attention of a fellow-captive, the Baron de Venac, who had been nineteen years confined for having presumed to give advice to Madame de Pompadour. He successively became acquainted with several others, two of whom were also the victims of the marchioness: one of them had been seventeen years in prison, on suspicion of having spoken ill of her; the other had been twenty-three years, because he was suspected of having written against her a pamphlet, which he had never even seen. The prisoners contrived to convey ink and paper to Latude through the hole; he opened a correspondence with them, encouraged them to write to each other, and became the medium through which they transmitted their letters. The burthen of captivity was much lightened to him by this new occupation.

An unfortunate change for the prisoners now took place. The benevolent and amiable-mannered Guyonnet was succeeded by Rougemont, a man who was a contrast to him in every respect; he was avaricious, flinty-hearted,

brutal, and a devoted tool of M. de Sartine. The diet which he provided for the captives was of the worst kind; and their scanty comforts were as much as possible abridged. That he might not be thwarted in the exercise of his tyranny, he dismissed such of the prison attendants as he suspected of being humane, and replaced them by men whose dispositions harmonised with his own. How utterly devoid of feeling were the beings whom he selected, may be judged by the language of his cook. This libel on the human race is known to have said, "If the prisoners were ordered to be fed upon straw, I would give them stable-litter;" and on other occasions he declared, "If I thought there was a single drop of juice in the meat of the prisoners, I would trample it under my foot to squeeze it out." Such a wretch would not have scrupled to put poison into the food, had not his master had an interest in keeping the captives alive. When any one complained of the provisions, he was insultingly answered, "It is but too good for prisoners;" when he applied for the use of an article, however insignificant, the reply was, "It is contrary to the rules." So horrible was the despotism of the governor that, within three months, four of the prisoners strangled themselves in despair. "The Inquisition itself," says Latude, "might envy his proficiency in torture!"

Latude was one of the first to suffer from the brutality of Rougemont. The apartment in which Guyonnet had placed him commanded a fine view. The enjoyment of a prospect was thought to be too great a luxury for a prisoner; and, accordingly, Rougemont set about depriving him of it. He partly built up the windows, filled the interstices of the bars with close iron net-work; and then, lest a blade of grass should still be visible, blockaded the

outside with a blind like a mill-hopper, so that nothing could be perceived but a narrow slip of sky. But his situation was soon made far worse. In a fit of anger, caused by his being refused the means of writing to the lieutenant of police, he imprudently chanced to wish himself in his former cell again. He was taken at his word. On the following morning, when he had forgotten his unguarded speech, he was led back to his dark and noisome dungeon. "Few will believe," says he, "that such inhuman jests could be practised in a civilised country."

M. de Sartine, being now appointed minister of the marine, was replaced by M. Le Noir. It was some time before Latude knew of this change, and he derived no benefit from it, the new head of the police being the friend of Sartine. He wished to address the minister, but the means were refused, and he again tasked his skill to remove the obstacle. The only light he enjoyed was when his food was brought to him. The turnkey then set down the lamp at the entrance of the wicket, and went away to attend to other business. Of the turnkey's short absence Latude availed himself to write a letter: it was written on a piece of his shirt, with a straw dipped in blood. His appeal was disregarded; and, to prevent him from repeating it in the same manner, the governor ordered a socket for the candle to be fixed on the outside of the wicket, so that only a few feeble rays might penetrate into the dungeon. But the captive was not to be easily discouraged; and, besides, he took a delight in baffling his persecutors. He had remaining in a pomatum pot some oil, sent by the surgeon to alleviate the colic pains which were caused by the dampness of his abode. Cotton drawn from his stockings supplied him with a wick. He then twisted some of his straw into a rope,

which he coiled up, and fastened, in the shape of a bee-hive. With another portion of straw he made a sort of stick, five feet long, with a bit of linen at the end of it. The turnkey was always obliged to bring his food at twice; and, while he was fetching the second portion, Latude thrust out the stick, obtained a light from the candle, lighted his taper, and then closely covered it over with the bee-hive basket. When he was left by himself he unhooded the lamp, and wrote a second letter with his own blood. The only result was, to make his jailers believe that he was aided by the prince of darkness.

It was not till Latude was again at death's-door that he was removed from his dungeon; on being taken out he fainted, and remained for a long while insensible. When he came to himself his mind wandered, and for some time he imagined that he had passed into the other world. Medical aid was granted to him, and he slowly recovered his health. The turnkeys now occasionally dropped obscure hints of some beneficial change, which he was at a loss to understand. The mystery was at length explained. The benevolent M. de Malesherbes had lately been appointed a cabinet minister, and one of his first acts was to inspect the state prisons. He saw Latude, listened to his mournful story, was indignant at his six-and-twenty years' captivity, and promised redress.

Latude had been more than eleven years at Vincennes, when the order arrived for his release. His heart beat high with exultation; but he was doomed to suffer severe disappointment. At the moment when he imagined that he was free, an officer informed him, that the minister thought it expedient to accustom him gradually to a purer air, and that he was therefore directed to convey him to a convent, where he was to remain for a few months.

These were the very same words which had been spoken to him when he was sent from the Bastile to Vincennes; and, knowing their meaning but too well, they almost palsied his faculties. His enemies had been busily at work; by gross misrepresentations, and by forging in his name an extravagant memorial to the king, they had induced M. de Malesherbes to believe that the prisoner's intellects were disordered, and that he could not be immediately released without peril.

It was to the hospital of Charenton, the Parisian bedlam, that the officers were removing Latude. When he was about to quit Vincennes, he heard the brutal Rougemont describe him to them as a dangerous and hardened criminal, who could not be too rigorously confined. It was also hinted, that the prisoner was gifted with magical powers, by virtue of which he had thrice escaped in an extraordinary manner. When he was turned over to the monks, called the Brothers of Charity, who had the management of Charenton, these particulars were faithfully reported to them, and he was introduced under the name of Danger, in order to excite an idea of his formidable character.

Unacquainted with the nature of Charenton, Latude, on seeing the monks, had supposed that he was in a monastery. On finding that he was in a mad-house, he dropped lifeless to the ground. He was conducted to a cell, which was over the vault where the furious lunatics were chained, and their shrieks and groans were horrible. In the night he heard the sound of voices, and discovered that two prisoners, one in the adjoining room, and the other in that above, were talking about him, out of their windows. They were both of them state prisoners, the hospital being occasionally converted into a jail by the

ministers: one was named St. Magloire, the other the Baron de Prilles. Latude introduced himself to them, and they promised him all the services in their power. De Prilles possessed considerable influence with the officers of the establishment, and he exerted it so effectually that he obtained permission for Latude to be visited by his fellow-captives. He had, however, enjoyed this comfort only for a short time, when Rougemont came and gave orders for his being placed in close and solitary confinement.

Latude remained in seclusion for a considerable time; but, at length, by dint of incessant remonstrances, De Prilles induced the superiors of the hospital to allow his new friend to take his meals in the apartment of St. Bernard, one of his fellow-captives. Another favour was soon after granted; he was permitted to take some exercise in the smaller court, when all the inmates of the place had been shut up for the night. It was then winter; and, at eight o'clock, the keeper led him to the court; and, when he was not disposed to walk with him, he placed his lantern on a stone, and watched him through some holes purposely bored in the door.

Trifling as were these indulgences, the worthy monks had disobeyed positive orders in allowing them. But they did not stop here. The head of the hospital, Father Facio, was so deeply moved by the injustice done to the captive that he waited on M. de Malesherbes to intercede for him. On his assuring the minister that the prisoner was submissive, docile, and perfectly sane, his hearer, who had been told that Latude was a furious madman, was astonished and indignant at having been deceived. He promised that he would speedily release him, and desired that he might, in the meanwhile, enjoy as much liberty as the hospital regulations would allow. Unfortunately,

however, for Latude, Malesherbes very shortly after ceased to be one of the ministers.

Though he failed to obtain his freedom, the situation of Latude was much ameliorated; he might roam wherever he would, within the bounds of the establishment. He derived additional comfort from several of the state prisoners being now suffered to take their meals together, instead of having them separately in their apartments. The party thus formed admitted to their society several of the lunatics who had been liberally educated, and were harmless. One of these unfortunate men asserted himself to be the Divinity; another claimed to be a son of Louis XV.; a third took a higher flight, and was the reigning monarch. These aspiring pretensions were strongly contrasted with the humility of others. A barrister, whose intellect love had shaken, manifested his insanity by throwing himself at every one's feet and imploring pardon. Another individual, who had been a hermit, obstinately persisted in believing that Latude was a German elector, and, in spite of all attempts to prevent it, would perform for him the meanest domestic offices. "If I told him in the morning," says Latude, "that a flea had disturbed my rest, he would not leave my chamber till he had killed it: he would bring it to me in the hollow of his hand, to show me what he had done! 'My lord,' he would say, 'it will bite no more, and will never again disturb the sleep of your most serene highness.'"

A fellow prisoner who had recently been confined in a cell during a furious paroxysm of insanity, now gave some information to Latude, which deeply wounded his feelings. From him Latude learned that his early friend d'Alegre was in the prison, a raving maniac, shut up in an iron cage. His entreaties were so pressing, that the

monks granted him permission to visit this unfortunate being. He found him a lamentable spectacle, shrunk to a skeleton, his hair matted, and his eyes sunken and haggard. Latude rushed to embrace him, but was repelled with signs of aversion by the maniac. In vain he strove to recall himself to the maniac's recollection; the lost being only looked fiercely at him, and exclaimed, in a hollow tone, "I know you not!—begone!—I am God!" This victim of despotism had been ten years at Charenton, and he continued there, in the same melancholy state, during the remainder of his existence, which was protracted till a very late period.

After Latude had been for nearly two years at Charenton, his friends succeeded in obtaining an order for his release, on condition that he should permanently fix his abode at Montagnac, his native place. He quitted the prison without hat or coat; all his dress consisting of a tattered pair of breeches and stockings, a pair of slippers, and a great-coat thirty years old, which damp had reduced to rottenness. He was penniless, too; "but," says he, "I was regardless of all these circumstances; it was enough that I was free!"

With some money, which he borrowed from a person who knew his family, Latude procured decent clothing. He called on M. le Noir, who received him not unfavourably, and desired him to depart without delay for Montagnac. Unfortunately, he did not follow this advice. He lingered in Paris to draw up a memorial to the king, soliciting a recompense for his plans; and he had an interview with the Prince de Beauveau, to whom he related his woeful story. In his memorial, he mentioned M. de Sartine; and, though he intimates that he said nothing offensive, we may doubt whether he manifested

much forbearance. The ministers now gave him peremptory orders to quit Paris; it is obvious that they were acquainted with his memorial, and were irritated by it beyond measure. He had proceeded forty-three leagues on his journey to the south of France, when he was overtaken by an officer of police, who carried him back a prisoner to the capital.

Latude was now taught that hitherto he had not reached the lowest depth of misery: he was doomed to experience a "bitter change, severer for severe." Till this time his companions in suffering had been men with whom it was no disgrace to associate; but, in this instance, he was tossed among a horde of the most abandoned ruffians on earth; he was immured in the Bicêtre, in that part of the gaol which was appropriated to swindlers, thieves, murderers, and other atrocious criminals, the scum and offscouring of France. On his arrival there, he was stripped, clad in the coarse and degrading prison attire, thrust into a dungeon and supplied with a scanty portion of bread and water.

He was now in the midst of wretches, who tormented him with questions as to what robberies and murders he had committed, boasted of their own numerous crimes, and laughed at his pretending to innocence. "I was condemned," says he, "to endure their gross and disgusting language, to listen to their unprincipled projects, in short to breathe the very atmosphere of vice." It was in vain that, to procure his liberation from this den of infamy, he wrote to the friends who had rescued him from Charenton; some of them were silenced by the old falsehood that he was a dangerous madman, and others were alienated by being told that he had broken into the house of a lady of rank, and by threats had terrified her

into giving him a large sum of money. This last calumny stung him to the soul, and he wrote to M. de Sartine to demand a trial; but his letter produced no other effect than the issuing of an order to take from him the means of writing. Such accumulated injustice soured his mind, and brooding over the hope of revenge, he assumed the name of Jedor, in allusion to a dog so called, the figure of which he had seen on the gate of a citadel, with a bone between its paws, and underneath as a motto, "I gnaw my bone, expecting the day when I may bite him who has bitten me."

While the money lasted which Latude had taken into the prison, he could obtain a supply of food, bad indeed in quality, and villanously cooked, but still capable of supporting nature. But the money was soon spent, and he was then reduced to the prison allowance, which was scanty in quantity, of the worst kind, and often polluted by an admixture of filth and vermin. Latude was a large eater, and the portion of food allowed to him was so trifling, that he was tortured by hunger. To such extremity was he driven, that he was compelled to petition the sweepers to give him some of the hard crusts which were thrown into the passages by the richer prisoners, and which were collected every morning for the pigs.

Bad as the fare of Latude was, his lodging was far worse. His windowless cell, only eight feet square, swarmed with fleas and rats to such a degree that to sleep was all but impossible: fifty rats at a time were under his coverlet. He had neither fire nor candle, his clothing was insufficient; and the wind, rain, and snow beat furiously through the iron grating, which barely admitted the light. In rainy weather, and during thaws, the water ran in streams down the walls of the dungeon.

Eight-and-thirty months were spent in this infernal abode. Rheumatism, that prevented him from quitting his pallet, was the first consequence of his exposed situation. This brought with it an aggravation of another evil; for when Latude was unable to approach the wicket, the keeper flung in his bread, and gave him no soup. Scurvy of the most inveterate kind at length attacked him, his limbs were swelled and blackened, his gums became spongy, and his teeth loose, and he could no longer masticate the bread. For three days he lay without sustenance, voiceless and moveless, and he was just on the point of expiring, when he was conveyed to the infirmary. The infirmary was a loathsome place, little better than a charnel-house, but the medical aid which he obtained there restored him, after a struggle of many months, to a tolerable state of health.

On his recovery, he was placed in a decent apartment. He did not, however, long enjoy it. Having attempted to present a petition to a princess of the house of Bouillon, who came to see the Bicêtre, he was punished by being thrust into a dungeon more horrible than that which he had previously inhabited. His own words will best describe what he underwent. "I was," says he, "still enduring a physical torture which I had experienced before, though never to so cruel and dangerous an extent. After having triumphed over so many disasters, and vanquished so many enemies by my unshaken constancy, I was on the point of yielding to the intolerable pain occasioned by the vermin which infested my person. My dungeon was totally dark, my eye-sight was nearly extinguished, and I tried in vain to deliver myself from the myriads of these noxious animals that assailed me at once: the dreadful irritation made me tear my flesh

with my teeth and nails, until my whole body becan covered with ulcers; insects generated in the wounds, and literally devoured me alive. It was impossible to sleep: I was driven mad with agony, my sufferings were drawing to a close, and death in its most horrid shape awaited me."

Gloomy as appearances were, the dawn of a brighter day was at hand. A providential occurrence which seemed calculated to destroy his last hope, was the cause of his redemption. In 1781, the President de Gourgue visited the Bicêtre, heard the story of Latude, desired that the captive would draw up a memorial, and promised to exert himself in his behalf. Latude wrote the memorial, and intrusted it to a careless messenger, who dropped it in the street. The packet was found by a young female, Madame Legros, who carried on in a humble way the business of a mercer, and whose husband was a private teacher. The envelope being torn by lying in the wet, and the seal broken, she looked at the contents, which were signed "Masers de Latude, a prisoner during thirty-two years, at the Bastile, at Vincennes, and at the Bicêtre, where he is confined on bread and water, in a dungeon ten feet under ground."

The gentle heart of Madame Legros was shocked at the idea of the protracted agony which the prisoner must have suffered. After she had taken a copy of the memorial, her husband, who participated in her feelings, carried it to the president. But the magistrate had been deceived by the falsehood that the captive was a dangerous incurable lunatic, and he advised them to desist from efforts which must be fruitless. Madame Legros, however, who had much good sense and acuteness, would not believe that the captive was mad: she again read the memorial attentively, and could perceive in it no indication of

disordered intellect. She was firmly convinced that he was the victim of persecution, and she resolved to devote her time and her faculties to his deliverance. Never perhaps was the sublime of benevolence so fully displayed as by this glorious woman, whose image ought to have been handed down to posterity by the painter's and the sculptor's hand. In the course of her philanthropic struggles, she had to endure calumny and severe privations, she was reduced to sell her ornaments and part of her furniture, and to subsist on hard and scanty fare, yet she never paused for a moment from the pursuit of her object, never uttered a sentence of regret that she had engaged in it. Her husband, too, though less personally active, has the merit of having entirely coincided with her in opinion, and aided her as far as he had the power.

It is delightful to know that her noble labours were crowned with success. Her toils, and the result of them, are thus summed up by Latude, who has also narrated them at great length. "Being thoroughly convinced of my innocence, she resolved to attempt my liberation; she succeeded, after occupying three years in unparalleled efforts, and unwearied perseverance. Every feeling heart will be deeply moved at the recital of the means she employed, and the difficulties she surmounted. Without relations, friends, fortune, or assistance, she undertook everything, and shrank from no danger and no fatigue. She penetrated to the levées of ministers, and forced her way to the presence of the great; she spoke with the natural eloquence of truth, and falsehood fled before her words. They excited her hopes and extinguished them, received her with kindness and repulsed her rudely: she reiterated her petitions, and returned a hundred times to the attack, emboldened by defeat itself. The friends her

virtues had created trembled for her liberty, even for her life. She resisted all their entreaties, disregarded their remonstrances, and continued to plead the cause of humanity. When seven months pregnant, she went on foot to Versailles, in the midst of winter; she returned home exhausted with fatigue and worn out with disappointment; she worked more than half the night to obtain subsistence for the following day, and then repaired again to Versailles. At the expiration of eighteen months, she visited me in my dungeon, and communicated her efforts and her hopes. For the first time I saw my generous protectress; I became acquainted with her exertions, and I poured forth my gratitude in her presence. She redoubled her anxiety, and resolved to brave everything. Often, on the same day, she has gone to Montmartre to visit her infant, which was placed there at nurse, and then came to the Bicêtre to console me and inform me of her progress. At last, after three years, she triumphed, and procured my liberty!"

In the first instance, the boon of liberty could not be said to be more than half granted; Latude being ordered to fix his abode at Montagnac, and not to leave the town without the permission of the police officer of the district. As his fortune was entirely lost, a miserable pension of four hundred livres (about £16) was assigned for his subsistence. By the renewed exertions of Madame Legros, however, the decree of exile was rescinded, and he was allowed to remain at Paris, on condition of his never appearing in the coffee-houses, on the public walks, or in any place of public amusement. The government might well be ashamed that such a living proof of its injustice should be contemplated by the people.

It was on the 24th of March, 1784, that Latude

emerged into the world, from which he had for five-and-thirty years been secluded. He and his noble-minded benefactress were, for a considerable time, objects of general curiosity. Happily, that curiosity did not end in barren pity and wonder, but proved beneficial to those who excited it. A subscription was raised, by which two annuities, each of 300 livres, were purchased, one for Latude, the other for his deliverer. Two other pensions, of 600 livres and 100 crowns, were soon after granted by individuals to Madame Legros, and the Montyon gold medal, annually given as a prize of virtue, was unanimously adjudged to her by the French Academy. The income of Latude also obtained some increase; but it was not till 1793 that it received any addition of importance: in that year he brought an action against the heirs of the Marchioness de Pompadour, and heavy damages were awarded to him. Notwithstanding the severe shocks his frame had undergone, the existence of Latude was protracted till 1805, when he died at the age of eighty.

CHAPTER XII.

Reign of Louis XVI.—Enormous number of Lettres-de-Cachet issued in two reigns—William Debure the elder—Blaizot imprisoned for obeying the King—Pelisseri—Prisoners from St. Domingo—Linguet—Duvernet—the Count de Paradès—Marquis de Sade—Brissot—the Countess de la Motte—Cardinal de Rohan—Cagliostro—the affair of the Diamond Necklace—Reveillon takes shelter in the Bastile—Attack and capture of the Bastile by the Parisians—Conclusion.

THE reign of Louis XV., which, as far as regarded himself, was every way inglorious, was protracted to the length of fifty-nine years; a duration which has rarely been equalled. Popular enthusiasm, or rather popular folly—the terms are often synonymous—at one time conferred on him the title of "the Well-beloved;" he lived to be sincerely hated, and he died unlamented, except by such of his flatterers and parasites as feared that they would be cast off by a new monarch. Of the enormous amount of private misery which, during the period of his sway, he must have inflicted, in exercising only one attribute of his despotism, some idea may be formed, from the circumstance of more than 150,000 *lettres-de-cachet* having been issued while he occupied the throne; an annual average of more than 2500. How many wives, parents, children, must have been yearly driven to despair by this atrocious tyranny! Though it is certain that the prisoners were not all treated with the same brutality as Masers de Latude, the mass of suffering must, nevertheless, have been more than can be contemplated without a shudder by any one who is not dead to the feelings of humanity.

In 1774, Louis XVI. ascended the throne. He was a perfect contrast to his predecessor. In his manners there was little of the dignity of a sovereign, and he was deficient in firmness and penetration; but, pure in morals, kind in heart, and honest in principle, he was unfeignedly desirous to do justice to his people, and to contribute to their welfare. Yet, so difficult is it to uproot a long-established abuse, and such is the power of ministers and men in office, that, even under the government of this well-meaning king, no fewer than 14,000 *lettres-de-cachet* are said to have been granted in the fifteen years which elapsed between the accession of Louis and the meeting of the States General.

The very first instances which I shall bring forward of the use made of *lettres-de-cachet*, in this reign, will afford proof of the unprincipled and arbitrary spirit of the men who held authority. We commence with William Debure the elder, one of the most eminent and intelligent of the Parisian booksellers. The family of the Debures carried on, from father to son, the same business in Paris for nearly two centuries. The subject of this sketch was in habits of intimacy with the most distinguished literary characters. His catalogues of celebrated libraries, to the number of forty-three, are much esteemed. At the time of his decease, in 1820, when he was eighty-six, he was the oldest bookseller in France, and was considered as the patriarch of bibliography. It was in 1778 that he was sent to the Bastile. In 1777, the Council of State thought proper to issue an ordinance, decreeing that the term of copyright should not in future extend beyond the time which was required to defray the expense of publishing. The council followed this up by another ordinance, authorising the sale of

pirated editions, on payment of a stamp duty. These acts, equally absurd and unjust, were in fact licenses to commit robbery upon authors and publishers for the benefit of the treasury, which shared the spoil with the robbers. Debure then held in his company the place of Syndic, which seems to be analogous to that of Master in our stationers' company. To him fell the task of stamping the pirated works. Well knowing that a great number of booksellers would inevitably be ruined by the new law, or rather violation of law, which the council had promulgated, Debure declined to comply with it, and desired that he might be allowed to resign. His resignation was not accepted, and he was thrice summoned to proceed to the stamping of the spurious books; and in each instance the significant hint was thrown out, "Stamp, or if you do not——." Debure remained immovable, and he was at length committed to the Bastile. The ministers, however, either became ashamed of their conduct, or, which is more probable, were overruled by the monarch; for, in the course of a few days, he recovered his liberty.

Another bookseller is said to have been punished in the same manner, for the extraordinary offence of executing, in the way of trade, an order which was given to him by his sovereign. Suspecting that his ministers kept him in ignorance of the sentiments and wishes of the people, Louis determined to obtain some knowledge of them from another quarter. To peruse the various political pamphlets of the day seemed to him the best mode of accomplishing his purpose. Accordingly, he directed a bookseller, named Blaizot, to send them regularly and secretly to a certain place, whence they were to be conveyed to him. This was done for about two months.

Alarmed to find the king possessed of so much information upon subjects with which they had believed him to be unacquainted, the ministers set to work to discover the source of it. Either Blaizot's imprudence, or the activity of their spies, soon made them masters of the secret. The luckless bookseller was speedily taught that there was an influence behind the throne which was greater than the throne itself. The Bastile received him. This audacious act is attributed to the Baron de Breteuil; of whom, however, it is but justice to state, that he is said to have liberated many prisoners, and much ameliorated the prison discipline. But he was at times harsh and impetuous, and may perhaps, on this occasion, have yielded to passion, or to the wish of his colleagues. Surprised by the customary supply of pamphlets being abruptly stopped, Louis inquired into the cause of it, and was equally astonished and indignant to find that Blaizot had been lodged in the Bastile, by virtue of one of those laconic billets which were signed Louis, and countersigned by a cabinet minister. Blaizot was instantly released, and the Baron de Breteuil was reprimanded, in the severest language, by his offended master.

That Breteuil, highly aristocratic in his principles, and believing the established order of things to be perfection itself, should consider it as a matter of course to silence all opponents by means of the Bastile, can excite no wonder; but, if a minister who sprang from the people, a republican by birth, and a professed friend of reform, could punish by imprisonment a man who ventured to criticise his measures, we must wonder indeed! Yet, if M. Linguet was not misinformed, such a case did actually happen. He tells us that, while he was in the Bastile, there was in the prison a captive named Pelisseri, who

had been three years in confinement, and whose sole crime was that he had made some remarks on the financial operations of M. Necker. The story is not probable. With some important faults, the minister had many virtues, and certainly had nothing cruel in his nature. It is very likely that the captivity of Pelisseri was the work of some secret enemy, who hated both him and Necker; and doubly gratified his vindictive feelings, by incarcerating the one and calumniating the other.

The agents of the French government in the colonies seem not to have been backward in following the example of tyranny which was set to them by their superiors at home. In one instance, a governor of St. Domingo, who had quarrelled with all the members of a court of justice, adopted a summary mode of proceeding against them. He shipped the whole of them, and sent them off to France as criminals. On their arrival they were placed in the Bastile, and kept separate from each other; and in this painful situation they remained for eight months. They were at length pronounced innocent, and were conveyed back to St. Domingo; but they received not the slightest compensation for more than a year's endurance of bodily and mental suffering.

The Bastile received, in September, 1780, a man whose talents were more worthy of praise than his temper. This was Simon Nicholas Henry Linguet, a native of Rheims, who was born in 1736. He was learned, acute, and eloquent both in speech and writing; but paradoxical, changeful, suspicious, violent, and wrong-headed. At the age of sixteen, he gained the three highest university prizes. After having visited Poland with the Duke of Deux-Ponts, and Portugal with the Prince de Beauveau, he commenced his literary career by a History of the

Times of Alexander the Great. Disappointed by D'Alembert, in his wish to obtain a seat in the French Academy, he became an inveterate enemy of D'Alembert and the party which was called the philosophical. His works succeeded each other with uncommon rapidity; the most remarkable of those which he published at this period are, the history of the Revolutions of the Roman Empire, and the Theory of Civil Laws. Both these works, which in many respects have great merit, excited a loud clamour, especially the latter, by the leaning which they manifest towards despotism. Linguet had soon reason to change his opinion on this subject.

The literary labours of Linguet might seem sufficient to occupy all his time; but the fact was not so. He was all the while a barrister in extensive practice. In splendid eloquence, and in the successful management of causes, he had few if any rivals. He boasted that he never lost more than two causes, "and those," said he, "I had a strong inclination to lose." It was mainly by his efforts that the obnoxious Duke d'Aiguillon escaped from deserved punishment. The duke proved ungrateful, and his irritated counsellor wrote him word that he had "stolen him from the scaffold," and that, if the peer did not do what was right with regard to his advocate, "he would keep him hanging for ten years at the point of his pen." D'Aiguillon thought it prudent to yield, but he took care to avenge himself in the end. The lucrative career of Linguet, as a barrister, was suddenly brought to a close by his brethren of the bar, some of whom envied his superior gains, and all of whom had been irritated by his violent and sarcastic language. They refused to plead with him, and the parliament sanctioned this resolution, and expunged his name from the roll of counsellors.

Shut out from forensic honours and emoluments, Linguet devoted himself to literature and politics. He began to publish a journal in 1774, but, in 1776, it was suppressed by the minister Maurepas. Apprehensive for his liberty, he quitted France, and successively resided in Switzerland, Holland, and England. It was in 1777, while he was in exile, that he established his well-known work, the Political, Civil and Literary Annals of the Eighteenth Century, which forms nineteen volumes. The Count de Vergennes gave him permission to return to France; but scarcely had he availed himself of it ere he was shut up in the Bastile, where he continued for above two years. On his release he settled at Brussels, and gained the good will of the Emperor Joseph, which, however, he soon lost, by espousing the party of the Belgian revolutionists. In 1791, he returned to France. During the reign of terror, he withdrew into retirement. He was, however, unable to elude the vigilance of the Jacobins: he was sent by them before the revolutionary tribunal, which, without suffering him to make any defence, condemned him to death, and he was accordingly executed in the summer of 1794.

While Linguet was in the Bastile, one of his opponents was sharing the same fate, though for a much shorter term. Duvernet, an ecclesiastic, published a pamphlet, anonymously, in 1781, in which he indulged his wit at the expense of Linguet, D'Espremenil, and other well-known characters. This he might have done with impunity, but he also attacked the government; and the government, in return, sent him to the Bastile for three weeks, to learn prudence. The lesson was thrown away upon him; for, soon after his release, he ventured to animadvert upon the conduct

of the Count de Maurepas, and was again lodged in the Bastile. His confinement lasted longer than in the first instance; and he availed himself of this compulsory leisure to write a life of Voltaire. The minister of police detained the manuscript; but the work, nevertheless, found its way into print in 1786, and had such an extensive sale that the French bishops took the alarm, and commissioned the keeper of the seals to complain to the king. Louis XVI., however, replied, "I will not meddle with this affair; if Duvernet is wrong, let him be refuted,—that is the business of the bishops." The author afterwards enlarged and remodelled his work; but he died in 1796, the year before the new edition was published.

Another prisoner who was also contemporary with Linguet in the Bastile, was an individual of mysterious origin and conduct, who ought to have found a place in an English prison rather than in a French one. This was a person who assumed the title of the Count de Paradès. He himself claimed to be descended from an ancient Spanish family of the same name—some affirmed him to be the natural son of a Count de Paradès; but he was generally believed to be of far humbler origin, the offspring of a pastry-cook named Richard who resided at Phalsburg. Of his early life nothing is known; it is at the age of twenty-five that we find him entering on his public career; and, by some means or other, he contrived to procure an extremely flattering reception at the French court. Fearing that he was too old to attain elevated rank in the military profession, he looked about for another road to fortune, and thought he had found it in adopting the perilous and undignified occupation of a spy. France was at that period secretly preparing for hostilities against England, the revolt of the British American

colonies seeming to afford her a favourable opportunity of taking vengeance for the defeats and disgrace which she had suffered in the Seven years' war. Deeming this an excellent opportunity to bring himself forward, Paradès voluntarily visited England, where he gathered some valuable information relative to our arsenals, ports, and naval and military establishments. The memorial which, on his return, he presented to Sartine, the French minister of marine, was so much approved of that he was despatched to procure further particulars. He was so successful in his inquiries that he was regularly engaged as a spy by Sartine, and was profusely supplied with the means to purchase the services of British traitors. Paradès was not idle—he bribed highly; and, if his own assertion may be credited, he found no difficulty in corrupting many clerks and officers of an inferior class. Though he may have exaggerated in this respect, there can be no doubt that there were too many base-minded wretches who were willing to sell their country. This fact is established by the circumstances which came out on the trial of La Motte, his less fortunate successor. Paradès reconnoitred all the English and Irish ports. In a part of his journeys he was accompanied by an officer of engineers, and they were several times in the utmost danger of being discovered. For the purpose of keeping up an intercourse with the French ministry, he fitted out a vessel, and had a regular establishment of messengers; the vessel served the double purpose of trading and conveying his despatches. Many of the communications which he made were highly important; he complains, in his memoirs, that some of them, which would have enabled France to strike fatal blows, were unaccountably neglected. One of his projects was to set fire to the

British fleet in the harbour of Portsmouth. His services were not unrewarded; he was pensioned, and appointed a colonel of cavalry. In the short time that he had been acting his part, he had also contrived to amass about 35,000*l.* by speculations in commerce and the funds, and perhaps by pocketing a heavy per-centage on the remittances from the French ministry. Nearly 30,000*l.* was sent to him by his employers, and it is obvious that, as to the disbursement of it, they could have no check whatever upon him. It was with a scheme for seizing upon Plymouth that he closed his career as a spy. In that port he either had, or pretended to have emissaries, and to have corrupted a serjeant and several soldiers of the feeble garrison. It was in pursuance of this plan that D'Orvilliers, with the combined French and Spanish squadrons, consisting of sixty-five sail, entered the Channel. It is notorious that Plymouth was then in an extremely imperfect state of defence, and would have been much endangered by a vigorous attack. Fortunately, however, D'Orvilliers, in spite of the remonstrances of Paradès, declined to make an attempt upon the place. Paradès, now visited France, and immediately received instructions to return to England; but, before he could depart, his adventurous occupation was brought to an abrupt close. He is said to have been suspected of playing the Janus-faced traitor, equally bribed by England and by France. The suspicion, though natural, was probably unjust, and may have been prompted by the friends of those officers whom he had accused of missing favourable opportunities. He was committed to the Bastile in April 1780, and was not liberated till April 1781. He was allowed to have what books he pleased, to carry on a free correspondence, and to be visited by his friends. The

presumptions against him could not have been strong; if they had been so, he would have been rigorously treated, and permanently confined. For three years after he was set free, Paradès continued to press the government for the payment of 25,000*l*., which he asserted to be due to him. The war, however, had exhausted the French treasury, and he consequently solicited in vain. In 1784 he sailed to St. Domingo, where he had purchased an estate, and he died there in the course of the following year.

He who appears next on the list of captives was a man—if indeed the name of man is not misapplied to him—whose crimes were of so dark a dye that to imprison him for them was unjust, solely because it was nothing less than assisting him to evade the punishment which justice would have inflicted on him. This abandoned individual has been correctly described, by a French writer, "as the profound villain named the Marquis de Sade, who, by his atrocious examples, and his equally horrible writings, proved himself to be the apostle of every crime,—of assassination, of poisoning,—and the enemy of all social order: this monster spent great part of his life in prison, and was twenty times saved from the scaffold by his title of Marquis."

The Marquis de Sade, who was descended from an ancient family of the Comtat Venaissin, was born at Paris, in 1740. He embraced the military profession, and served in all the German campaigns of the Seven years' war. In 1766, he married an amiable and virtuous woman, to whom he proved a perpetual source of wretchedness. A sense of duty induced her, for a considerable period, to aid in extricating him from the difficulties in which he involved himself, but she was

finally obliged to give him up. In the same year that he was united to her, one of his infamous adventures caused him to be imprisoned and exiled; and no sooner was he allowed to return to Paris than he took an actress into keeping, carried her to Provence, and introduced her as his wife to the gentry around his mansion. These, however, were merely the venial offences of Sade. His criminality took a far higher flight. In 1778, he would have fallen a victim to the justice of his country, for horrible cruelty to a female, had he not been snatched from it by a *lettre-de-cachet*, which confined him for a time at Saumur, whence he was removed to Pierre-Encise.

This danger did not operate as a warning to him. At Marseilles, in 1772, in company with his valet, who was the companion of his debaucheries, he acted in such a manner that the parliament of Aix prosecuted him and his servant, and ultimately pronounced them guilty of unnatural acts and of poisoning: the persons poisoned are said to have been two loose women, to whom they administered stimulants of the most dangerous kinds. Sade took flight, but was seized in Savoy by the King of Sardinia, and sent to the castle of Miolans. He made his escape from the castle, and concealed himself in Paris, where, in 1777, he was discovered, and sent to Vincennes. He escaped, was retaken, was lodged again at Vincennes, and was treated with great rigour for two years. In 1784, he was transferred to the Bastile.

At Vincennes and the Bastile he wrote the earliest of those works which alone would suffice to brand his name with indelible infamy. It is truly said of them, that "everything the most monstrous and revolting, that can be dreamt by the most frenzied, obscene, and san-

guinary imagination, seems to be combined in these works, the mere conception of which ought to be looked upon as a crime against social order." Sade was a voluminous writer, and produced many other works, plays, romances, verses, and miscellanies, which have never seen the light.

At the Bastile, but a short time before the attack on it, he quarrelled with the governor; and, by means of a sort of speaking-trumpet, harangued the passengers in St. Anthony's Street, and endeavoured to excite them to arms. For this he was sent off to Charenton. In 1790, the decree of the National Assembly, which liberated all the victims of *lettres-de-cachet*, put an end to his imprisonment, after it had continued for thirteen years. Sade was a partisan of the revolution, in its worst aspect; but even the revolutionists of 1793 shrank from contact with so foul a being. He was arrested by them, and for nearly a year was an inmate of various prisons. After this, he remained at large till the reins of government were assumed by Napoleon. The first consul put a stop, in 1801, to the publication of Sade's works, and sent him to St. Pelagie; from that prison he was removed to Charenton, in 1803, and there he spent his days till the close of his dishonoured existence in 1814, when he was seventy-five years of age. To the very last his detestable doctrines and habits experienced not the slightest change.

One of the most eminent of the French revolutionists, from whom a considerable party took its denomination, was among the latest prisoners of the Bastile. John Peter Brissot was born in 1754, at the village of Ouarville, near Chartres, where his father, who was a pastry-cook in Chartres, had a trifling property. It was from his native place, the name of which he anglicised, that

he afterwards styled himself Brissot de Warville. He received a good education; and, as he also read with great avidity, he accumulated a large stock of miscellaneous but undigested knowledge. In the English language he acquired a proficiency which was unusual among Frenchmen at that period, and his study of it contributed powerfully to give his sentiments a republican tinge; for he dwelt with delight on the characters of the great men who withstood the tyranny of Charles the First. Brissot was placed in an attorney's office at Paris; and it is a curious circumstance, that one of his fellow-clerks was Robespierre, who afterwards became his deadly political foe. In two years, Brissot got tired of legal drudgery, and determined to look to literature for subsistence. His first essay was a satire, which he subsequently owned to contain much injustice, and for which he narrowly escaped being lodged in the Bastile. A pamphlet which he published attracted the notice of Swinton, an Englishman, a man utterly devoid of honourable feelings, who engaged him to superintend the reprinting of the Courrier de l'Europe, at Boulogne. This engagement was soon terminated; and Brissot, who had received two hundred pounds on his father's death, purchased the necessary titles for practising at the bar. The money thus laid out was thrown away, he being soon compelled to resign all hope of succeeding as an advocate. His next scheme, of the success of which he did not allow himself to doubt, was to establish in the British capital a Lyceum, which was to serve as a point of union to literary men of all countries, and was to carry on a universal correspondence with them, and to issue a periodical work for the more wide diffusion of English literature. As might have been foreseen, this magnificent institution, of which he was of

course to be the presiding genius, proved to be nothing more than an abortion. Instead of reaping fame and profit from the periodical, Brissot found that no one would buy it, and he was arrested and imprisoned by the printer. Having, however, contrived to get free, he returned penniless to France in 1784, where another prison was ready to receive him. Merely, it is said, because he had spoken lightly of the works of D'Aguesseau, he was sent to the Bastile. Others attribute his imprisonment to the malice of his inveterate and unprincipled enemy Morande, who accused him of having written a libel, entitled le Diable à Quatre, which was from the pen of the Marquis de Pelleport. Through the influence of Madame de Genlis, Brissot was released at the expiration of two months. This visit to the Bastile was not calculated to diminish his republican fervour. That fervour was no doubt much increased by his visit to the United States, whither he went early in 1788, and whence he returned in the following year.

Brissot, on his return, threw himself with all his heart and soul into the Revolution. His mind was heated by the reading of ancient and modern writers, who have held up republican heroes to our admiration, and it was irritated by wrongs which arbitrary power had inflicted; and he rashly and illogically concluded, that under a monarchy it was impossible for liberty to exist. Such was the case, also, with many of the talented, eloquent, and warm-hearted men who, acting in concert with him, were known by the title of Brissotins and Girondists. No one who has attentively perused the numerous documents relative to the French revolution can deny that at a moment when, according to their own confession, there was not a handful of Republicans in France, the Bris-

sotins had determined to subvert the monarchical government and establish their favourite system. It is as certain, too, that they were not delicate in the choice of means, and that truth was not allowed to stand in the way of their designs. Believing a republican order of things to be the perfection of human wisdom, they seem to have thought that, "to do a great right, they might do a little wrong." They were soon taught by woeful experience that the strict rule of right can never be violated without danger; and that, however good his intentions may be, he who does a little wrong opens the way for the commission of the worst of crimes.

Brissot was elected a member of the Parisian Common Council, an assembly which, in less than four years, became infamous for its ferocious and sanguinary proceedings. It must have been gratifying to his feelings, that one of the first acts which it fell to his lot to perform, was to receive the keys of the Bastile. He now established a newspaper called the French Patriot, in which he made daily violent attacks on the monarch, the ministers, and all the institutions of the state. It was he who, in conjunction with Laclos, after the flight of Louis XVI. to Varennes, drew up the petition which called on the Constituent Assembly to depose the king, and which gave rise to a riot that cost some blood. At the period when the election of members to the Legislative Assembly was going forward, the court exerted itself to prevent him from being chosen a representative. Its misdirected efforts, however, as was the case in many other instances, only produced a diametrically opposite effect to that which was intended; the attention of the electors was directed to Brissot, and he was unanimously returned as one of the Parisian members.

Brissot was nominated a member of the diplomatic committee, and its reports were almost uniformly drawn up by him. It was principally by his exertions that a war was brought about with Austria: his purpose in producing that war was to forward the dethroning of the king. In the Legislative Assembly he, for a while, enjoyed great popularity, and he availed himself of it to batter in breach the tottering fabric of the monarchy. But the Jacobins, meanwhile, with Robespierre at their head, all animated by a deadly hatred of Brissot and his friends, were gradually gaining influence; and, in proportion as they won over the populace and the most hot-headed of the legislators, the power of Brissot declined. For a moment he meditated making common cause with the constitutional royalists, in order to avert the disastrous consequences which he began to dread would ensue, in case the Jacobins should triumph. The plan, however was abandoned. In the revolution of the 10th of August he did not participate; Danton was the prime mover in that transaction. The department of the Eure deputed Brissot to the convention; and thenceforth, with a few exceptions, his conduct was prudent and moderate. From the moment that he and his friends took their seats, they were daily and furiously assailed by the Jacobins. They maintained the contest for several months, but they were finally overthrown, and the majority of them perished on the scaffold. Brissot was put to death on the 31st of October, 1793, and met his fate as calmly as though he had only been ascending the tribune to read a report to his late colleagues. The few tears which he shed during his imprisonment were not for himself, they were wrung from him by the agonizing thought that he must leave a beloved wife and children in a state of destitution.

The last prisoners that remain to be noticed, owed their residence in the Bastile to an affair which excited the public attention in an extraordinary degree, and contributed greatly to render the Queen of France an object of suspicion and unpopularity. This was the affair of the diamond necklace, in which the principal part was played by the Countess de la Motte. The Countess, and a brother and sister, were descendants of Henry de St. Remi, a natural son of Henry II., but her family had been reduced to beggary. The three children, two of whom she had found asking alms, were taken under the protection of the Marchioness of Boulainvilliers, who charitably brought them up at her own expense. D'Hozier, the eminent genealogist, having ascertained that they really sprang from the house of Valois, the Duke of Brancas presented to the queen a memorial in their favour, and a small pension was in consequence granted to each of them.

In 1780, Jane, the eldest, married the Count de la Motte, who was one of the guards of the Count d'Artois. Their united resources being exceedingly scanty, the Countess looked about for the means of improving them at the cost of some dupe. She had a prepossessing appearance, fluency of speech, and considerable talents for intrigue, masked by a semblance of openness and candour. The personage whom she selected to try her experiment on, was the cardinal Prince de Rohan, Bishop of Strasburgh, who was then in his fiftieth year. Rohan, though a bishop and a cardinal, did not think it necessary to assume even the appearance of decorum and virtue. He was weak, vain, dissolute, presumptuous, and extravagant. For a long time he had been in great disfavour with Maria Antoinetta, the Queen of France. She, as

well as her mother, the empress queen, had been disgusted by his unseemly conduct, some years before this, while he was ambassador at Vienna, and the queen's disgust was heightened by his indiscreet language respecting her, and by the insulting manner in which he had spoken of her mother in a letter to the Duke d'Aiguillon. She, however, did not interfere to prevent his obtaining several ill-deserved appointments from the government, but she manifested her resentment by refusing to admit him into her presence, and by expressing her unbounded contempt of him.

Rohan was in despair at not being admitted into the society of the queen. All that he enjoyed seemed worthless, while he was denied that privilege. It was on this egregious weakness that Madame de la Motte founded her hopes of success. The deceiver acted her part with much skill; she gradually led the besotted cardinal to believe that she had acquired the queen's entire confidence, and could exercise great influence over her. She was, therefore, obviously the fittest person to bring about the reconciliation for which he was so eager. The countess readily undertook to be the mediator. Week after week she deluded him by tales of her pleadings to the queen, and of the slow but sure progress that she made in restoring him to the royal favour. At last he was told that, though the queen had forgiven him, there were reasons why she could not alter her behaviour towards him at court, and that all intercourse between them must be carried on through the medium of Madame de la Motte. Billets, forged by a M. Villette, now began to be addressed to him in her majesty's name: twice the writer requested a loan from Rohan, and the request was granted by the delighted dupe. To lure him on still

further, he was informed that Maria Antoinetta would admit him to an interview at night, in the Bois du Boulogne. To play this character, a lady of easy virtue, named d'Oliva, whose person and voice resembled the queen's, was tutored by La Motte. The cardinal saw her for a moment, and was in raptures, but he had not time to express them before the nocturnal farce was put an end to by a preconcerted interruption. This last fraud having raised the infatuation of the cardinal to the highest pitch, measures were taken to turn his folly to advantage. There was in the hands of Bœhmer and Bossange, the court jewellers, a splendid diamond necklace, valued at 1,800,000 francs, which the queen had recently declined to purchase, on the ground that it was too expensive. It was this rich prize which La Motte had in view. To get possession of it she made Rohan her tool; she succeeded in making him believe—for his fund of credulity appears to have been inexhaustible—that the queen was extremely desirous to be mistress of the necklace; but that, as she did not choose to be seen in the affair, she wished him to negotiate for her, and to purchase it on his own credit. A forged authority, from Maria Antoinetta, was produced, in support of this fiction. Rohan rushed blindly into the snare; he bought the necklace, giving for it four bills, payable at intervals of six months, which the jewellers consented to receive on his showing them the paper authorising him to treat with them. Another forged document, bearing the queen's signature, enabled Madame de la Motte to get the necklace into her own possession. Her husband is said to have been immediately sent off to London, to dispose of a part of the diamonds.

When the first bill became due, it was dishonoured, for Rohan had no money, and had relied upon receiving the

amount from the queen. The alarmed jewellers hastened to the palace, to remonstrate with her majesty on the subject. The queen was indignant and astonished at the story which they told. Cardinal de Rohan, the Countess de la Motte, and some others, were arrested, and conveyed to the Bastile. The parliament was charged with the trial of the prisoners. The trial was not brought to a conclusion till the 31st of May, 1786. Rohan was acquitted, but Madame de la Motte was sentenced to make the *amende honorable*, to be branded on both shoulders and publicly whipped, and be confined for the rest of her days in the prison of the Salpêtrière. Villette the forger, and d'Etionville his accomplice, were condemned to the galleys for life. After having undergone the ignominious part of her sentence, the countess contrived to escape, and joined her husband in London, where she died in 1791.

Rohan, though acquitted, was compelled by the king to resign the office of high almoner, and the Order of the Holy Ghost, and was exiled to one of his abbeys. In the early part of the Revolution, he for a short time seemed friendly to it; but, his aristocratic feelings soon getting the upper hand, he became one of its most inveterate enemies, and strained every nerve to forward the designs of the emigrants. He died in Germany in 1803.

Besides La Motte and Rohan, there were committed to the Bastile some subordinate actors in the affair of the diamond necklace, and also a singular adventurer, who was known to the world under the title of Count Cagliostro. The count himself, while he threw a veil of mystery over his birth, appeared to claim an oriental and illustrious origin; but his enemies assert that his real name was Joseph Balsamo, and that he was the son of

poor parents at Palermo, where he was born in 1743. They represent him, too, as a degraded being, sometimes living by the sale of chemical compositions, sometimes by swindling, and, still more frequently, by the prostitution of a handsome wife. Yet it is certain that, in his travels over the largest portion of Europe, he gained the esteem and confidence of many distinguished characters. That he was a man of talents is undeniable: his person and manners were attractive, he was acquainted with most of the European and Asiatic languages, his knowledge is said to have been extensive, and he had a powerful flow of eloquence. Where he procured the funds by which he kept up the appearance of a man of distinction, it would not be easy to ascertain. He was intimate with Cardinal de Rohan, who had sought his friendship, and this intimacy was the cause of his being incarcerated, on suspicion of being an accomplice of the cardinal. He was acquitted by the parliament. Cagliostro subsequently spent two years in England, whence he passed into Italy. At Rome, his wanderings were brought to a close; he was arrested in 1791, and sent to the castle of St. Angelo, on a charge of having established a masonic lodge, and written a seditious, heretical, and blasphemous work, entitled Egyptian Masonry. He was condemned to death, but for this penalty the Pope substituted perpetual imprisonment. He is believed to have died in confinement in 1795.

The long catalogue of captives is now exhausted; ruin impends over the fortress in which they spent their solitary and mournful hours; but, before its doom is sealed, we must see it changing its character, and becoming, for the first time, a place of refuge to a persecuted individual. In April 1789, at a period when

the minds of all Frenchmen were in a state of fermentation, and when, like the ground-swell which announces a coming tempest, popular outbreaks were happening in various quarters, there occurred a riot of a very serious nature in the suburb of St. Antoine. Reveillon, a man of good character, who had himself risen from the working class, was the person against whom the fury of the mob was directed. He was a paper-hanging manufacturer, and employed three hundred men. The charge against him, which was calumniously made by an abbé who was in his debt, was, that he had declared bread to be not yet dear enough, and expressed a hope that hunger would compel the workmen to labour for half their present wages. The thoughtless multitude, always too ready to credit such slanders, immediately determined to take summary vengeance on him: the first step of the rioters was to hang him in effigy. On the first day they were prevented from going further, but on the following day they returned to the charge with increased numbers and means of offence. Reveillon's house and manufactory were plundered of everything that was portable, and were then burned to the ground. It was not till the mischief was completed that the troops arrived. They seem to have thought it necessary to atone for their extraordinary severity; a furious contest ensued, and between four and five hundred of the rioters are said to have been slaughtered on the spot. Each of the political parties accused its rival of having, for sinister purposes, been the planner of this sanguinary scene. In the midst of the confusion, Reveillon was so fortunate as to escape from the mob, and he sought for shelter in the Bastile, where, during a whole month, he deemed it prudent to remain.

In little more than three months after the destruction of Reveillon's establishment, the storm of popular anger, which had long been gathering in the capital, burst forth with irresistible violence, and shook to its very basis the throne of France. Matters were, indeed, come to a crisis between the royalist and the reforming parties. The court seemed resolved to commit the question to the decision of the sword: a formidable force, consisting chiefly of foreign troops, was accumulated around the metropolis; and the language held by some of the courtiers and ministers was of the most sanguinary kind. The Baron de Breteuil did not hesitate to say, "If it should be necessary to burn Paris, it shall be burned, and the inhabitants decimated: desperate diseases require desperate remedies." To dissolve the National Assembly by force, and to consign to the scaffold its most distinguished members, were among the remedies which this political Sangrado designed to administer for the purpose of checking the disease.

As a preliminary to the projected operations, the ministry of M. Necker was abruptly broken up, and another was formed, composed of men notorious for their hostility to the rights of the people. It was a sufficient indication of what was intended, that Necker, Montmorin, De la Lezarne, De Puysegur, and De St. Priest, were replaced by Breteuil, Broglie, De la Vauguyon, and others of the same stamp. Necker was ordered to quit the kingdom, and to keep his departure a profound secret.

The dismissed minister obeyed the order so strictly that not even his daughter knew of his setting out; but the ridiculous silence which was required of him was of no avail. On the following day, which was Sunday, the 12th of July, it was known at Paris that the favourite of

the people was expelled from office, and was leaving the country. All the citizens were instantly in alarm. Groups assembled in every street, and more than ten thousand persons were soon congregated at the Palais Royal. Every one was enraged, but no one knew what to propose, till Camille Desmoulins ascended a table in the Palais Royal, and exhorted his hearers to take up arms; he then plucked a green leaf, which he put into his hat, as a rallying sign, and the symbol of hope. His example was universally followed. The crowd now proceeded to a waxwork museum, took from it the busts of Necker and the Duke of Orleans, covered them with crape, carried them in procession through the streets, and compelled the passengers to take off their hats. Near the place Vendôme, they were assailed by a detachment of the Royal German regiment, and several persons were wounded. The Germans were, however, repulsed. At the Place de Louis XV. there was another contest. They were charged by the dragoons of the Prince de Lambesc, who dispersed them, and killed a soldier of the French guards, and one of the bearers of the busts. The prince himself, a brutal character, followed some of them into the garden of the Tuileries, sabring indiscriminately the fugitives and those who were walking: among those who fell beneath his hand were a female and an aged man. The multitude rallied, and chairs, stones and everything that could be converted into a weapon, was employed against the dragoons, who were finally compelled to fly. By this time the French guards, who were confined in their barracks, because they favoured the people, had learned the death of their comrade. It was impossible to restrain their rage; they broke out, fired on the Royal German regiment, and then took post to cover the

multitude from further attack. Some of the Swiss regiments were ordered to reduce them to obedience, but they refused to obey; and it was thus rendered obvious that the court had fatally miscalculated in relying upon the army for support.

During that night, and the whole of the succeeding day, Paris was like a hive about to send forth a swarm. In the course of the night, the most disorderly part of the populace burned the custom-houses at the barriers, and plundered the gunsmiths' shops. Weapons of every kind, and of all ages and countries, were eagerly sought for and brought into use. In the morning the electors met at the town-hall to decide upon the steps which ought to be taken. It was manifest that they had nothing to expect from the leniency of the court; it was, in fact, understood that Paris was to be attacked on seven points in the evening of the 14th, and it was therefore absolutely necessary to provide the means of defence. In a few hours a plan was matured and proclaimed for arraying forty-eight thousand Parisian military. The alarm-bells were kept incessantly ringing throughout Paris, and drums were beating in every street to summon the inhabitants to their posts. The scanty supply of arms was the most serious obstacle which the citizens had to overcome. To remove it in part pikes were fabricated, fifty thousand of which were distributed within six-and-thirty hours. Fortunately, it was discovered that there was a large quantity of arms at the Hôtel des Invalides: these were immediately seized upon, and thus 28,000 muskets, besides sabres and some cannon, were obtained. Sufficient powder was procured, and hundreds of men were occupied in casting balls.

The position of the Bastile, interrupting the com-

munication between various parts of the capital, and commanding a considerable portion of the city, was a cause of much embarrassment to the citizens. M. de Launey had received instructions to defend his post to the last extremity. He was provided with ample means, as far as regarded ammunition and arms; for he had on the ramparts fifteen cannon, and twelve wall-pieces, each of which carried a ball of a pound and a half; he had also plenty of shot, 15,000 cartridges, and 31,000 pounds of powder. Besides these there were, on the summit of the building, six cart-loads of paving stones, bars of iron and other missiles, to hurl on an approaching enemy, when the cannon could no longer reach him. But, with unaccountable negligence, no magazine of provisions had been formed: there was not food enough in the place to last for twenty-four hours. The garrison consisted of 32 Swiss and 82 invalids.

It is certain that the Committee of Electors, sitting at the town-hall, did not entertain any idea of reducing the Bastile by arms. A sort of neutrality was the most for which they hoped. That this is the fact, is proved by their having twice sent a deputation to the governor, calling on him to admit a detachment of the Parisian militia, to act in conjunction with the garrison. The ground on which they claimed this admission was, that the city ought to have a control over any military force which was stationed within its limits. To such a proposal the governor could not accede without perilling his head.

A M. Thuriot was now sent by the district of St. Louis de la Culture, to desire that the cannon might be removed from the towers. De Launey replied that this could not be done without the king's orders, but

that he would withdraw them from the embrasures to prevent their appearance from exciting alarm. Thuriot was permitted to ascend to the summit of the fortress, that he might be enabled to report to those who sent him the real state of things, and he availed himself of this permission to exhort the soldiers to surrender. This they refused to do, but they unanimously and solemnly promised that they would not be the first to fire.

But though the Committee of Electors was not disposed to engage in hostilities which seemed likely to be both fruitless and dangerous, there were others who were more daring, and some, perhaps, who were aware that the garrison had no provisions, and little inclination to fight. From various parts, but especially from the suburb of St. Antoine, an enormous multitude, with every variety of weapon, hurried to the fortress, shouting "We will have the Bastile! down with the troops!" Two of them boldly ascended the roof of the guard-house, and with axes broke the chains of the great draw-bridge. The throng then pressed into the court, and advanced towards the second bridge, firing all the while upon the garrison. The latter replied with such effect that the assailants were driven back; but they placed themselves under shelter, whence they kept up an incessant discharge of musketry.

A despatch to the governor, informing him that succour was at hand, having been intercepted by the committee, that body sent a third deputation to prevail on him to admit the Parisian forces. It reached the outer court, and was invited to enter the place by some officers of the garrison; but either it mistook the meaning of the invitation, or was intimidated by the scene of carnage, for it retired without fulfilling its mission. The

firing was recommenced by the people, and was answered with deadly effect by their antagonists. Three waggon-loads of straw were now brought in and set on fire, to burn the buildings near the fortress; but they were so unskilfully managed that they proved obstacles to the besiegers, who were compelled to remove them. While they were thus employed, they received a discharge of grape-shot from the only cannon which the garrison fired during the conflict.

The French guards now arrived with four pieces of cannon, to take a part in the attack. The sight of this reinforcement entirely depressed the spirits of the besieged, which had already begun to sink. They called on their commander to capitulate. Anticipating, no doubt, the fate which was reserved for him, he is said to have seized a lighted match, intending to apply it to the powder-magazine. A large portion of the neighbourhood would have been destroyed with the Bastile, had not two non-commissioned officers repelled him with their bayonets from the dangerous spot. A white handkerchief was hoisted on one of the towers as a flag of truce, and a parley was beaten by the drums of the invalids. These signs were unnoticed for a considerable time by the besiegers, who continued their fire. At length, finding that all was silent in the Bastile, they advanced towards the last drawbridge, and called to the garrison to let it down. A Swiss officer looked through a loop-hole, and required that his comrades should be allowed to march out with the honours of war. That being refused, he declared that they were willing to submit, on condition of not being massacred. "Let down the bridge, and nothing shall happen to you," was the reply. On this assurance, the governor gave up the key of the bridge, and the conquerors entered in triumph.

A vast majority of the assailants were undoubtedly brave and honourable men; but there were among them numbers of the most infamous of mankind; men who lent their aid in tumults only that they might gratify their love of plunder and blood. To these degraded wretches must be attributed the cruelties which sullied the victory. No sooner was the day won than they began to gratify their diabolical propensities. Their first achievement was to attempt to throw into the flames a young girl whom they found in a fainting fit, and supposed to be the governor's daughter. She was, however, saved by one of the Parisian volunteers. Others were less happy. The unfortunate De Launey was massacred on his way to the town-hall, after having received innumerable sword and bayonet stabs from the savages around him. Five of his officers were put to death in an almost equally barbarous manner.

The loss of the besiegers was eighty-three killed on the spot, fifteen who died afterwards, thirteen crippled, and sixty wounded.

In the Bastile there were found only seven prisoners; four of them had forged bills to an immense amount, two were insane, and the last, the Count de Solange, had been confined at the request of his father for dissipated conduct.

The Bastile soon ceased to exist. It was demolished by order of the civic authorities of Paris; and, when the demolition was completed, a grand ball was given on the levelled space. The capture and downfall of this obnoxious fabric were hailed with delight by the friends of liberty in every part of the globe, and they long furnished a favourite and fertile theme for moralists, orators, and poets.

The site, now known as the Place de la Bastile was selected

as the burial place of the champions of the Revolution of 1830, and the Colonne de Juliet erected over their remains: this column is of iron, surmounted by a figure emblematical of liberty.

The ground was again opened to receive the bodies of those who were slaughtered in the Coup d' Etat of Louis Napoleon in February, 1848. Again, in 1871 the bodies of the victims of the Communists' reign of Terror were deposited here.

The vaults had previously been filled with gunpowder and other combustibles by the Communists, with the intention of blowing up the column and converting the entire neighbourhood into a heap of ruins—but this purpose was abandoned; the powder being required for their defence. The combustibles were afterwards set on fire but no serious damage accrued.

INTRODUCTION.

I have appended to this volume a True Account of the State Prisoner, commonly called "The Iron Mask," extracted from documents in the French Archives, which are so curious that I have thought a correct and clear account of this unfortunate prisoner might be placed alongside of those who suffered imprisonment under a tyrannical government, and which will ever be a blot on France and on the character of Louis XIV.

Thank God we live in a country free from such acts of tyranny and oppression, and let us hope that France may never witness such times again; that true religion and freedom will lift her to that moral standard where cruelty and oppression will never dare show their face.

William Tegg.

APPENDIX.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE STATE PRISONER COMMONLY CALLED THE IRON MASK.

Extracted from documents in the French Archives.

The curiosity of the public has been now, for above a century, so much wrought upon by the mystery which has enveloped the name of the Iron Mask, (or as the French more properly designate him, "*the Man of the Iron Mask*,"*) that the eagerness for discovery has thus been carried much farther than the real importance of the subject deserved. Numerous have been the papers written, and the conjectures hazarded in favour of different theories; almost all presenting, at first view, some semblance of probability; but all without exception, crumbling to nothing when exposed to the researches of accurate inquiry. Under these circumstances, it is certainly satisfactory, that the question should be finally set at rest.

* "L'homme au masque de fer."

It is singular that, among all the inquiries hitherto made respecting the Iron Mask, no one seems ever to have thought of recurring to the only source from whence true information could be derived—the archives of the French Government, during the reign of Louis the Fourteenth. It was reserved for M. Delort to make these researches; which he did by the permission of the Count d'Hauterive, Keeper of the Archives of the office of Secretary of State for the Foreign department, and the result has been perfectly conclusive. In those archives, he found the continued correspondence of the French ministers, proving, beyond a doubt, that the Iron Mask was an Italian of the name of Matthioli; a personage who was first put on the list of candidates for that honour, in a pamphlet published in 1801, by M. Roux (Fazillac);* who, however, was then unable to support his opinion with sufficient authorities.

Hercules Anthony Matthioli † was a Bolognese of ancient family, distinguished in the law. He was the son of Valerian Matthioli and Girolama Maggi, and was born on the 1st of December, 1640. On the 13th of January, 1661, he married Camilla, daughter of Bernard Paleotti, and widow of Alexander Piatesi. By her he had two sons, one of whom only had posterity, which has long since been extinct. Early in life he was public reader in the University of Bologna, but he soon quitted his native city to enter into the service of Charles the Third, Duke

* M. Roux (Fazillac) published several of the documents, since republished by M. Delort, but he does not appear to have seen the whole series; and therefore his reasoning upon the subject is inconclusive. M. Delort has, however, copied a great deal from him in his narrative—whole sentences sometimes, word for word, without any acknowledgment of the plagiarism.

† Delort.

of Mantua, by whom he was much favoured, and towards the conclusion of whose reign he was made Secretary of State. His successor, Ferdinand, Charles the Fourth, the last sovereign cf Mantua, of the house of Gonzaga, created Matthioli Supernumerary Senator of Mantua, an honour which had formerly been enjoyed by his great grandfather, and gave him the title of Count. When he ceased to be Secretary of State at Mantua does not appear; but he was clearly not in that office when he first, unhappily for himself, was involved in diplomatic relations with the agents of the French Government.

Towards the end of the year 1677, the Abbé d'Estrades,* ambassador from France to the Republic of Venice, conceived the idea, which he was well aware would be highly acceptable to the insatiable ambition of his master, of inducing the Duke of Mantua† to allow of the introduction of a French garrison into Casale, ‡ a strongly fortified town, the capital of the Montferrat, and in a great measure the key of Italy. The cession of the fortress

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* The Abbé d'Estrades, Ambassador for a considerable time from Louis the Fourteenth, to the Republic of Venice, was son of Godfrey, Count d'Estrades, so long employed in negociations and embassies in Holland, and who was one of the eight Marshals of France made upon the death of Turenne. Madame Cornuel called them, "La Monnoie de M. de Turenne."

† Ferdinand Charles IV., Duke of Mantua, a weak and unfortunate Prince. Died July the 5th, 1708, as it is said of poison, administered by a lady he was in love with.

‡ Casale did not come into the possession of the French till 1681. In 1695, it was taken by the Allies, and its fortifications demolished. It was, however, retaken by the French, and fortified again. The King of Sardinia, (Victor Amadeus,) made himself master of it in 1706. His successor, Charles Emmanuel, lost it again to the French in 1745, but regained it the following year. Its castle citadel and all its fortifications have since been demolished.

of Pignerol* to the French, by Victor Amadeus,† Duke of Savoy, in 1632, had opened to them the entry of Piedmont, and the possession of Casale would enable them to invade the Milanese, whenever they were so inclined.

At this time the council of the Duke of Mantua, headed by his mother,‡ an Austrian Archduchess, was entirely in the interests of the Court of Spain; while the young Duke, plunged in pleasures and excesses of every kind, took little apparent interest in politics. The great difficulty, therefore, which Estrades had to encounter in the prosecution of this intrigue, was the establishment of a channel of communication with the Duke; who, as has been stated, was surrounded by persons in the Spanish interest. If he could once enter into secret relations with that Prince, he hoped to be able to bribe him into a concurrence in his designs; for Ferdinand Charles was both needy and unprincipled. He had, besides, discovered, as he writes word to Louis, in his first letter to him, dated Venice, Dec. 18th, 1677, that the Duke was not so abandoned to his pleasures but that he still had some ambition, and much chagrin at the state of subjection in which he was kept by his mother; joined to a great distrust of the Spaniards, who were supposed to foment the divisions of

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* The strong fort of Pignerol, acquired to the Crown of France by the negociations of Richelieu, continued in their possession for 68 years. In 1696, it was restored by treaty to Victor Amadeus II., Duke of Savoy; its fortifications having been previously dismantled.

† Victor Amadeus I., Duke of Savoy, a prince of great bravery and considerable talent. He married Christina, daughter of Henry IV., King of France, by whom he had two sons, Francis Hyacinth and Charles Emmanuel II., successively Dukes of Savoy. Died October 7th, 1637. He was the first Duke of Savoy, who appropriated to himself the title of *Royal Highness*.

‡ Isabella Clara, of Austria, daughter of the Archduke Leopold, who was grandson of the Emperor Ferdinand III. Married June 13th, 1649, to Charles III., Duke of Mantua.

the Court of Mantua, with the view of, eventually, themselves obtaining possession of Casale and the rest of the Montferrat.

The desired channel of communication Estrades thought he had found in Matthioli, who was a complete master of Italian politics, as well as much in the Duke's good graces. Before, however, he proceeded to enlist him in his service, he deemed it necessary to discover what was the bent of his inclinations. This he effected ingeniously enough, by sending a certain Giuliani, in whom he appears to have placed implicit confidence, to Verona, where Matthioli then was, to act as a spy upon him. The report of Giuliani, upon his return to Venice, was so favourable, both with regard to the discontent of Matthioli against the Spaniards, "who had always amused him with hopes, and afterwards abandoned him," and his wish to enter into the service of the French Monarch, that Estrades lost no time in sending him (Giuliani) back again for the purpose of conferring with Matthioli upon the subject of the proposed negociation.

Giuliani was instructed by the Ambassador to enlarge to Matthioli upon the jeopardy which the sovereignty of the Duke of Mantua was in, in consequence of the different pretensions of various branches of his family to his territories, which were more or less countenanced by the Spaniards for the purposes of their own aggrandizement. These were, among others, those of the Empress Eleanor*

* The Empress Eleanor was daughter of Charles, Duke of Rhetelois, who died in the life-time of his father, Charles I. Duke of Mantua, in spite of which he is generally denominated by historians, Charles II., Duke of Mantua. She became, on the 30th of April, 1651, the third wife of Ferdinand III., Emperor of Germany, whom she survived many years, and died December 5th, 1686. She was the aunt of Ferdinand Charles IV., Duke of Mantua.

to the Montferrat; and those of the Marquis of Laguna* to the Duchy of Guastalla, to the prejudice of the Duke of Mantua, who was the rightful heir. Giuliani was also to lament the dependent state of the Duke of Mantua, the revenues of whose states, as well as all the powers of government, were entirely in the hands of his mother, and the Monk Bulgarini;† and to explain the necessity which, on these accounts, existed for that Prince to seek, without delay, the alliance and protection of Louis the Fourteenth. He was to assure him, in conclusion, that Estrades had no doubt of the readiness of Louis to assist in freeing the Duke of Mantua from his embarrassments; but that, in order to enable him to do this effectually, it was absolutely necessary to garrison Casale with French troops.

Matthioli concurred entirely in these views of Giuliani, and offered to sound the Duke of Mantua upon the subject. A few days afterwards, he sent word to Estrades, that he had managed to have an interview with that Prince (having previously established himself secretly in the neighbourhood of Mantua), and had found him generally well-disposed to the plan. He also requested Estrades to send Giuliani again to him, in order that they might act in concert; the said Giuliani being also a person who might, without suspicion, carry intelligence backwards and forwards,‡ which was not the case with Matthioli himself.

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* Thomas de la Cerda, Marquis of Laguna, in Spain, married April 22nd, 1672, to Maria Louisa, only daughter of Vespasian Gonzaga, only brother of Ferdinand III., the reigning Duke of Guastalla.

† The Monk Bulgarini appears to have been the confessor and favourite of the Duchess-mother of Mantua; and to have been entirely devoted to the Spanish interests.

‡ The profession of Giuliani was that of an editor of newspapers, in which capacity he was in the habit of travelling from town to town, to collect and convey news.

Giuliani was accordingly sent, and had an audience of the Duke of Mantua, who received him very favourably, and acquainted him with his willingness to enter into an alliance with France, and to deliver up Casale, upon the understanding that Estrades was to try to obtain for him any reasonable requests he might make; the principal of these, in addition to the grant of a sum of money, was the being made generalissimo of any French army that might be sent into Italy, "that being," says Estrades, "what he wishes beyond all things; or rather, that being the only thing he is very anxious for, in order that he may have the same consideration in Italy the late Duke of Modena* had, and the late Duke of Mantua,† who at his age commanded in chief the Emperor's army, with the title of Vicar General of the Empire."

The Duke of Mantua also announced in this conference, that he put himself, on this occasion, entirely into the hands of Matthioli, whom he promised to reinstate in his place of Secretary of State, and to appoint his first minister, as soon as he himself should have regained his authority, and the treaty he was now projecting with the King of France had been duly executed.

To Matthioli were joined in the negociation the two counsellors of the Duke of Mantua, in whom he had the

* Alphonso IV., Duke of Modena, succeeded his father Francis I. in his territories, and in the command in chief of the French army in Italy, in 1658. Died in the 29th year of his age, July 16, 1662, having married, May 27, 1655, Laura Martinozzi, niece of Cardinal Mazarin.

† Charles III., Duke of Mantua, father of Ferdinand Charles IV., the reigning Duke, had the command of the Imperial army in Italy, and took upon himself the office of Vicar General of the Empire in Italy, during the interregnum which followed the death of the Emperor Ferdinand III. in 1657, in virtue of a diploma, lately granted to him by that Prince. His right was contested by the Duke of Savoy, who, upon the ground of old usage, claimed the office for himself. The Electors of the Empire annulled the appointment of the Duke of Mantua.

most confidence; the Marquis Cavriani and Joseph Varano; and these, together with Giuliani, Estrades, Pinchesne the French Secretary of Embassy at Venice, and the Duke himself, were the only persons in Italy acquainted with the business; so that the Ambassador had certainly very fair grounds for expressing his hopes "the secrecy, so necessary in this affair, would remain impenetrable."

This conference was followed by another, in which the Duke showed the greatest impatience to conclude the treaty; entreating that Louis might be instantly made acquainted with the state it was at present in, and requesting, or rather imploring, for a French army; on the arrival of which he hinted much might be done against the Duchy of Milan. Finally, he promised to have a conference with Estrades, "as he was soon going to Venice, where they might see one another conveniently, and without being observed, on account of the Carnival, during which all the world, even the Doge and the oldest Senators were accustomed to go about in mask."

He also requested that the Cardinal d'Estrées* might not be made a party to the negociation; because he was so well known to be employed generally by Louis to negociate with the Italian Sovereigns, that his entering into it would naturally excite the suspicions of the Spaniards that something secret was going on; and that they would

* Cæsar Bishop of Laon and Cardinal d'Estrées, son of the first Marshal of France of that name, was employed in various negociations with the Princes of Italy; but is now more remembered for his courtier-like reply to Louis XIV. That Monarch one day at dinner complained of having lost all his teeth. "And who is there, Sire, that has any teeth?" said the Cardinal (Sire, et qui est-ce qui a des dents?) What made the flattery the more ludicrously gross was, that the Cardinal, though an old man, had remarkably fine teeth, and showed them very much whenever he opened his mouth.

then ruin him, the Duke of Mantua, before he could receive the assistance of the French Monarch; and that thus the hopes of both the contracting parties, from the treaty at present under discussion, would be frustrated. To this proposition Estrades agreed, though unwillingly. We cannot but here remark how skilful a negociator he seems to have been; beginning as he does by making trial of his tools, and then of his arguments, and afterwards bringing both of them to bear very judiciously on the negociation, in the way the most likely to lead to a favourable result.

When the affair was advanced thus far, Estrades lost no time in forwarding an account of it to Louis, to whom, as he says himself, he had not before ventured to write upon the subject, because at first he despaired of being able to bring the intrigue to bear: but he now thought it in so good a train, that upon receiving the approval of his proceedings from Louis, he could almost answer for its success. The letter of Estrades was accompanied by a schedule, containing the demands of the Duke of Mantua, and by a letter from Matthioli, also addressed to Louis, in which he offers to devote himself to his service, to strive to detach his master, the Duke of Mantua, from the Austrian interest, and insinuates very plainly his wish and intention of selling him and his fortress of Casale to the French Monarch; whom, he says, he "regards and reveres as a *Demigod.*" To these protestations Louis returned, as was natural, a very civil answer; generally promising his protection and favour to Matthioli.

On the 24th of December of the same year, Estrades*

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* 1677.

writes to M. de Pomponne,* (then one of the Secretaries of State,) to inform him of a discovery he has made from the Duke of Mantua himself, that the Austrian party have determined, in case any French troops should arrive in Italy, and that the Duke of Mantua should manifest any disposition of favouring them, to seize upon Casale and Mantua. He therefore adds that the Duke, though thoroughly well-disposed towards the French interests, cannot take any active part in their favour, unless Louis will send into Italy a sufficient force to secure Casale and the rest of the Duke's territories from the attempts of the House of Austria. He subsequently seems to hint his fear that the life of the Duke of Mantua may be made away with by the Austrians, in order the more easily to possess themselves of his territories. "We must besides, Sir, consider that the Duke of Guastalla† being the nearest relation of the Duke of Mantua, as well as his heir, there would be danger that, if the Duchess,‡ his daughter, who is very ill and has no children, should die, some *misfortune* might happen to the Duke of Mantua, which would assure his territories to the Spanish Nobleman, who has

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* Simon Arnaud de Pomponne, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1671 to 1679, when he was dismissed from his office, but retained the title of Minister of State, with permission to attend the Council. A man, like so many of his race, who united considerable talents to great excellence of character. Madame de Sévigné says, in speaking of the eminent station he had filled, that "Fortune had wished to make use of his virtues for the happiness of others."

† Ferdinand III. Duke of Guastalla, descended from a younger branch of the House of Gonzaga; and the heir to the Duchy of Mantua, if he survived Ferdinand Charles; which however was not the case. He died of dropsy, January 11th, 1678.

‡ Anne Isabella, eldest daughter of Ferdinand III., Duke of Guastalla, married August 13th, 1671, to Ferdinand Charles IV., Duke of Mantua, by whom she had no offspring.

married the second daughter* of the Duke of Guastalla, and whose marriage the Spaniards, *doubtless with this view*, made up at Vienna by means of Don Vincent."†

To Estrades, Louis returned a long and detailed statement of his views; in which he approves generally of the design of putting a French garrison into Casale; intimates upon what terms it may be done; rejects a request of the Duke of Mantua to procure for him the restoration of those parts of the Montferrat which by former treaties had been ceded to the Duke of Savoy; objects to the largeness of his demands of 100,000 pistoles as the price of Casale; promises to bear him harmless and remunerate him for any injury that may be done to him by the Spaniards, in consequence of his siding with the French; and finally, instructs Estrades to entertain the notion that a French army is about to pass the Alps, and in the meanwhile to protract the negociation, in order to allow him, Louis, time to make his various preparations. Indeed this last point, the necessity for delay, was so strongly

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* This is evidently a mistake, and should be read *niece* instead of *second daughter*. It alludes to Maria Louisa, only daughter of Vespasian Gonzaga, only brother of Ferdinand III., Duke of Guastalla, married to a Spanish nobleman, Thomas de la Cerda, Marquis of Laguna. At this time neither of the daughters of Ferdinand had children, and *she*, consequently, after them, was the heiress of their claims upon the Duchies of Guastalla and Mantua. The second daughter of Ferdinand III., Maria Victoria, married June 30th, 1769, Vincent Gonzaga Count of St. Paul—the person who is here erroneously described as having been the means of marrying her to another person.

† Vincent Gonzaga, Count of St. Paul, afterwards Duke of Guastalla, was descended from a younger son of Ferrant II., first Duke of Guastalla. After contesting for many years his right to that Duchy with Ferdinand Charles IV., Duke of Mantua; during which they were both merely made use of, by turns, as the instruments of the French and Austrian domination; he was finally successful in establishing himself at Guastalla in 1706, where he died April 28th, 1714. By his wife, Maria Victoria, second daughter of Ferdinand III., Duke of Guastalla, he left two sons, who successively succeeded him in the sovereignty of that Dutchy.

impressed upon Estrades, upon more than one occasion, that, in a subsequent despatch, he expresses his regret that the negociation goes on so smoothly and prosperously, that he cannot find any difficulties to enable him to protract it till the troops of Louis are in readiness to march towards Italy.

The only point in dispute appears to have been, what the sum of money should be which was to be given by the French Monarch to the Duke of Mantua. The stipulation for 100,000 pistoles was decidedly rejected by Louis; and at length, after some difficulty, Estrades reduced the demand of the other party to 100,000 crowns, and those not to be paid till after the signature of the treaty between the two sovereigns.

The next event of importance in the negociation was the interview, effected at Venice during the Carnival, between the Duke of Mantua and Estrades. It took place at midnight, on the 13th of March, 1678, in a small open space, equally distant from the residence of the Duke and the Ambassador, and lasted a full hour. In it the Duke dwelt much upon his impatience for the conclusion of the treaty with France; and for the speedy appearance of the troops of the latter in Italy, alleging as his reason, the constant and lively fear he was in of the Spaniards. He also announced his intention of sending Matthioli, in whom, says Estrades, "He has a blind confidence, and who governs him absolutely," to the French court; thinking that his presence there might bring matters to a speedier issue.

Estrades, who had now ascertained that his master could not possibly spare an army for Italy that year (1678), and who therefore was more than ever anxious to prevent

such a consummation, consented with considerable difficulty to the project; resolving, at the same time, to obstruct the departure of Matthioli for France as long as possible; and writing to M. de Pomponne to delay him and his business, when at length he arrived there, by every means in his power.

Subsequently the procrastinating intentions of Estrades were more easily put into execution than he expected; for Matthioli, of his own accord, deferred his journey from spring to autumn on various pleas, of which the principal one was, his unwillingness to leave his master, exposed to the insinuations, and perhaps menaces, of the Spanish partizans, by whom he was surrounded.

Finally, after many delays, Matthioli, accompanied by Giuliani, set off for Paris in the beginning of November, 1678, and arrived there towards the end of the same month. He found the Abbé d'Estrades, who had quitted his Venetian Embassy, arrived there before him, and had several interviews with him and M. de Pomponne; during which a treaty was agreed on to the following effect:—

1. That the Duke of Mantua should receive the French troops into Casale.

2. That if Louis sent an army into Italy, the Duke of Mantua should have the command of it.

3. That immediately after the execution of the treaty, the sum of 100,000 crowns should be paid to the Duke of Mantua.*

The treaty contained also some other articles of minor importance.

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* Delort, quoting from an Italian manuscript, in the records of the office of the French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which appears to have been written by Giuliani.

Matthioli himself had the honour of being received in a secret audience by Louis,* who made him a present of a valuable ring.* He also received a sum of money for himself,* and a promise of a much larger gratification† after the ratification of the treaty. He was also promised that his son should be made one of the King's Pages; and that his brother, who was in the Church, should receive a good benefice.‡ He was then sent back to Italy, with a detailed instruction from Louvois,§ upon the manner of executing the articles of the treaty.

The French Government was thus far so entirely satisfied of the sincerity and good faith of Matthioli, and so convinced of the speedy admission of the French troops into Casale, that they immediately upon his departure took decided measures in furtherance of their plan.‖ Thus the Marquis de Boufflers,¶ Colonel-General of the Dragoons, was sent to take the command of the forces, which were assembling near the frontier of Italy, at

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* Delort, quoting from the same authority.

† M. Delort says the sum actually given to Matthioli, was 400 Doubles, and the sum promised him 400,000 Doubles, which, from its largeness, he conceives must be a mistake; but he adds that it is so written in the Italian manuscripts before referred to.

‡ Delort.

§ Francis Michael Le Tellier, Marquis de Louvois, son of the Chancellor Le Tellier, Secretary of State for the War department, from 1666 to the time of his death, in 1691, which occurring suddenly, and just as he was on the point of being disgraced, gave occasion to a report that he was poisoned: for which, however, it appears there was no foundation. He was of a haughty and cruel disposition, and was the minister who planned and ordered the inhuman ravages of the Palatinate, which have so indelibly disgraced the reign of his master.

‖ Delort.

¶ Louis Francis, Marquis and afterwards Duc de Boufflers, Marshal of France in 1693. Died in 1711. One of the best of Louis the Fourteenth's generals.

Briançon, in Dauphiny. Catinat,* Brigadier of Infantry, afterwards the celebrated Marshal of that name, who was to serve under the command of Boufflers, had orders to conceal himself in the fortress of Pignerol,† and to adopt a feigned name, that of Richemont; while the Baron d'Asfeld,‡ Colonel of Dragoons, was despatched to Venice, upon a mission for exchanging the ratifications of the treaty; for which purpose he was to unite with M. de Pinchesne, the Chargé d'Affaires there, during the absence of an ambassador.

Though these measures were taken with the greatest secrecy, it was impossible but that the report of the assembling of the French forces so near the territories of the Duke of Savoy,§ should reach the ears of the Spaniards, and

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* Nicholas de Catinat, Marshal of France in 1698. "He united," says Voltaire, "philosophy to great military talents. The last day he commanded in Italy, he gave for the watch-word, 'Paris and St. Gratien,' the name of his country house. He died there in the retirement of a real sage, (having refused the blue ribbon) in 1712."

† Upon reference to the Mémoires de Catinat, published in 1819, this event is found to be thus adverted to:—"In 1679, Catinat was charged with some negociations with the Duke of Mantua; but the affair failed of success, in consequence of the treachery of the Secretary of that prince. Catinat, according to the King's orders, was anxious to punish the traitor. He remained at Pignerol some days, and having engaged him in a hunting party, had him arrested." It also appears from these Memoirs, that both Catinat and Boufflers were again despatched to Italy on the same errand, in 1681, when Casale was really given up to Louis; and on this occasion, Louvois, in his instruction to Boufflers, mentions Matthioli by name, as the person whose treachery had prevented the success of the former negociation.

‡ I am not sure whether I am correct in imagining that this was the Marshal d'Asfeld, who distinguished himself at the battle of Almanza, and died at great old age, in 1743.

§ Victor Amadeus II., at this time a minor, and under the Regency of his mother, Mary Jane de Nemours. In 1713, he became King of Sicily, which kingdom he was compelled to exchange for that of Sardinia, in 1720; abdicated the throne in favour of his son, in 1730; and died in 1732. This prince possessed in an eminent degree, the attributes of his race—valour and skill in military matters, and faithlessness in his treaties and engagements with his brother sovereigns.

excite their suspicions; as well as those of the Venetians, and of the other Italian states. Accordingly, we find that remonstrances were several times made by the ambassadors of the Emperor* and King of Spain† at Venice, to the Duke of Mantua, upon the rumour of his intention of delivering the capital of the Montferrat to Louis. Ferdinand Charles denied that this was the case; but was not believed.

As, therefore, the ferment and discontent in the north of Italy increased, the agents of the French Government were naturally anxious that the treaty should be ratified and executed as soon as possible; for which purpose, the Duke of Mantua had promised to meet the Baron d'Asfeld at Casale, during the month of February, 1679. In proportion, however, as the French became more impatient for the conclusion of the affair, the Count Matthioli found fresh excuses for delaying it. At one moment his own ill health detained him at Padua, and prevented his coming to Venice to confer with Messrs. de Pinchesne and d'Asfeld; at another, the Duke of Mantua could not raise a sufficient sum of money to enable him to transport his court to Casale; at another, it was necessary to have time to persuade Don Vincent Gonzaga to accompany the Duke to Casale, as it was not considered safe to leave him at Mantua; and again, the Duke of Mantua was obliged to stay at Venice, having promised to hold a *carrousel* there.

In spite of all these difficulties, it was, however, finally arranged that the Baron d'Asfeld and Matthioli should

* Leopold I. succeeded Ferdinand III. in 1657, died in 1705.

† Charles II. the last King of Spain of the House of Austria.—Died in 1700.

meet, on the 9th of March, at Incréa, a village ten miles from Casale, in order to make the exchange of the ratifications; that the Duke of Mantua himself should go to Casale on the 15th of the same month; and should put the troops of Louis into possession of the place on the 18th; on which day, being the ninth after the ratification, it was decided they could without fail be there.

The various excuses made by Matthioli for the non-execution of his agreement, all more or less frivolous, appear first to have given to the French Government a suspicion of his fidelity. Whether the reception of Matthioli at the French court had not been such as he expected, though it would appear to have been most gracious; or whether, which is more probable, the sum of money given to him did not content him;—or whether, which is also probable, the Spaniards having got some knowledge of the transaction, had offered him a still larger bribe, it is impossible for us, at this distance of time, exactly to decide; but it appears evident that, from the time of his returr from Paris, his conduct with regard to the negociation became entirely changed; and he was as anxious to procrastinate as he had formerly been to advance it. It was, therefore, natural for the French diplomatists to conclude, supported as this opinion also was by various circumstantial evidence, that he had been bought by the other side—a circumstance of no extraordinary occurrence in the career of a needy Italian adventurer.

His weak and timid master followed implicitly his counsels; but appears to have been himself in the intention of acting fairly and faithfully by the French Government. The first intimation that is given in the correspondence, of the suspicions with regard to the conduct of Matthioli,

occurs in a letter from Pomponne to Matthioli himself, dated February 21st, 1679, in which he says that Louis "is unwilling to doubt that the promise which has been so solemnly made* him will not be kept;" an expression which certainly seems to imply, that some doubt did exist in the mind of Louis and of his ministers upon the subject.

The next is an elaborate and skilful letter of Estrades to Matthioli, written on the 24th of March, 1679, from Turin, where he was then awaiting the execution of the treaty, in which he mingles promises and threats to encourage him to perform his stipulations; and shows sufficiently his suspicions to the object of them, to frighten him; at the same time leaving open the hope of forgiveness in case of future good conduct.

By the subsequent letters of Pomponne to Pinchesne, it appears, that the treachery of Matthioli soon became more apparent. Indeed, Estrades, during his stay at Turin, obtained the most indubitable evidence of the fact; for the Duchess of Savoy† showed to him the copies of all the documents relative to the negociations respecting Casale, which Matthioli had given to the President Turki, one of her ministers who was in the interests of Spain, when he passed through Turin on his return from Paris. From Turki, as it subsequently appeared, Matthioli had received a sum of money for his information.

Meanwhile Asfeld was arrested by the orders of the Count de Melgar, the Spanish Governor of the Milanese,

* Namely, of the delivery of Casale.

† Mary Jane Baptista of Savoy, daughter of Charles Amadeus, Duke of Nemours and Aumale (who was killed in a duel by his brother-in-law, the Duke of Beaufort). Married May 11th, 1665, to Charles Emmanuel II., Duke of Savoy; Regent of the territories of her son during his minority. Died March 15th, 1724.

as he was on his way to the rendezvous at Incréa; and Matthioli was the first person who acquainted the French agents with this misfortune, as well as with the fact that the Duke of Mantua had been obliged to conclude a treaty with the Venetians, in a directly contrary sense to the one he had first entered into with France; "having probably been," as Pomponne remarks, in a letter to Pinchesne, "himself the sole author of the accidents and impediments he acquaints us with."

Upon the arrival of the intelligence at Paris, of the arrest of Asfeld, the French ministers, though their suspicions of Matthioli were now changed into certainties, being still anxious, if possible, to get possession of Casale, empowered Catinat to supply his place, and to conclude the ratification of the treaty. Intelligence of this change was conveyed to Matthioli in a letter from Pomponne, of the date of March 14th, 1679.

Catinat accordingly went, on the appointed day, from Pignerol to Incréa, accompanied by St. Mars,* the Commandant of that part of the fortress of Pignerol which was appropriated for a state prison, and by a person of confidence, belonging to the embassy of Estrades. But the appointed day passed over without bringing Matthioli to Incréa; and the next morning Catinat was informed that his arrival there was discovered; that the peasants of the neighbourhood were in arms; and that a detachment of cavalry was on its way, for the purpose of seizing upon him and his companions. What became of the latter

* Benigne d'Auvergne de Saint Mars, Seigneur of Dimon and Palteau; Bailli and Governor of Sens; successively Governor of Exiles, the Island of St. Marguerite, and the Bastile. At Pignerol he had only the command of the state prisoners, the Marquis d'Herleville being governor of the fortress. St. Mars came to Pignerol a short time before the arrival there of Fouquet, who was the first prisoner confided to his care.

does not appear, except that they escaped the threatened danger; but he himself got away secretly, and in disguise, to Casale; where he gave himself out as an officer of the garrison of Pignerol. The Governor there, who was well-disposed to the French interest, received him with great civility; and, at a dinner he gave to him, joined in drinking the King of France's health with enthusiasm.* The next day Catinat was too happy to return undiscovered to Pignerol.

Matthioli, meanwhile, instead of keeping his engagement at Incréa, had returned to Venice, and had had several interviews with Pinchesne, the particulars of which we are unacquainted with, as the letters containing the accounts of them, though alluded to by M. de Pomponne in his answers, have not been published.

Pinchesne was, at this time, convinced of the perfidy of Matthioli, having, in addition to various other suspicious circumstances, discovered that he had been secretly at Milan for some days. He, however, did not think it advisable entirely to break with him; but advised him to go and confer with Estrades at Turin; representing to him the danger to which he exposed himself if this affair failed of success through his fault.† Matthioli followed the advice of Pinchesne to his own ruin, and going to Turin, presented himself forthwith to Estrades, to whom he offered many insufficient excuses for his delay.

The vindictive Louis had, meanwhile, determined to satisfy his wounded pride and frustrated ambition, by taking the most signal vengeance of Matthioli; as we find by the following note from Louvois to his creature, St.

* Roux (Fazillac.)

† Delort.

Mars, dated St. Germain, April 27th, 1679.—"The King has sent orders to the Abbé d'Estrades, to try and arrest a man, with whose conduct his Majesty has reason to be dissatisfied; of which he has commanded me to acquaint you, in order that you may not object to receiving him when he shall be sent to you; and that you may guard him in a manner, that not only he may not have communication with any one, but that also he may have cause to repent of his bad conduct; and that it may not be discovered that you have a new prisoner."

Nothing therefore could be more opportune to Estrades than the arrival of Matthioli at Turin, and accident soon enabled him to lay a successful plan for executing the wishes of the French monarch. The plan he is said to have communicated to the Duchess of Savoy, who consented to the arrest taking place, but objected to its happening on her territories.*

Matthioli complained much of want of money, occasioned by the expenses of his journey, and the bribes he had been obliged to offer to the Duke's mistresses. Estrades took this opportunity of forwarding his scheme, by telling him that Catinat, who, under the name of Richemont, commanded the troops destined to take possession of Casale, had considerable sums at his disposal, which he would be happy to make so good a use of as in ministering to his wants; provided he, Matthioli, would give him a meeting on the frontier towards Pignerol, at which also Estrades would be present.† Of course, the reason assigned for

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* Delort.

† M. Roux (Fazillac) gives these particulars, upon the authority of a letter from Estrades to Pomponne, of May 7th, 1679; and of one from Catinat to Louvois of the same date; neither of which are published.

naming the frontier as the place of rendezvous was, that Catinat could not leave the neighbourhood where his troops were stationed.

To this proposition Matthioli readily consented; and having first made a journey to Casale, he returned and met Estrades (who was accompanied on this expedition by his relation the Abbé de Montesquiou) by appointment, in a church half a mile from Turin, from whence they proceeded together to the frontier. At three miles from the place of rendezvous they were stopped by a river, of which the banks were overflowed, and the bridge broken. Matthioli himself assisted in repairing the bridge, which was to convey him to his captivity;* and they then proceeded on foot to the place where Catinat awaited them accompanied only by two officers, the Chevaliers de St. Martin and de Villebois, and by four soldiers of the garrison of Pignerol.

Before, however, Matthioli was arrested, Estrades held some conversation with him, and obliged him, in the presence of Catinat, to confess that he had in his possession all the original papers regarding the delivery of Casale, and that they were left in the custody of his wife at Bologna; who was living in the convent of the nuns of St. Thomas in that city. This was necessary, because Matthioli had lately refused to give them up to the Duke his master,† alleging that he no longer knew where they were. His confession, upon this occasion, afterwards turned out to be false, and that the papers in question were concealed in a wall at Padua.

Immediately after this avowal had been extracted from him, he was arrested; and offered no resistance, though

* Roux (Fazillac.)

† Delort.

he always carried a sword and pistols about his person. He was conducted to Pignerol, where he arrived late at night.

Catinat, in his letter to Louvois, giving an account of this seizure, which took place on the 2nd of May, 1679, dwells much upon the secrecy with which it was effected, so that, says he, "no one knows the name of the rascal, not even the officers who assisted in arresting him." And he concludes by mentioning, that in order to perpetuate the mystery in which his prisoner is enveloped, he has given him the name of "Lestang,"—"not a soul here knowing who he is." In the subsequent correspondence of Louvois with Catinat and St. Mars, he is very generally designated by that name. At first, St. Mars carried his precaution so far as to serve Matthioli himself, and not allow any of the garrison to approach him; soon afterwards his valet, who had been arrested by the exertions of Estrades, was allowed to attend upon him; and subsequently St. Mars appointed those of his officers, in whom he had the most confidence, to assist in guarding him. It may be remembered that Louvois, in his letter to St. Mars, which has been before quoted, orders that the prisoner, who was to be brought to Pignerol, "should have intercouse with no one;" and in the subsequent letters from the same Minister, difficulties are even made to his being permitted to see either a physician or a confessor.

These extraordinary precautions against discovery, and the one which appears to have been afterwards resorted to, of obliging him to wear a mask, during his journeys, or when he saw any one, are not wonderful, when we reflect upon the violent breach of the law of nations, which had been committed by his imprisonment. Matthioli, at the

time of his arrest, was actually the plenipotentiary of the Duke of Mantua, for concluding a treaty with the King of France; and for that very sovereign to kidnap him and confine him in a dungeon was certainly one of the most flagrant acts of violence that could be committed; one which, if known, would have had the most injurious effects upon the negociations of Louis with other sovereigns; nay, would probably have indisposed other sovereigns from treating at all with him. It is true the Duke of Mantua was a prince insignificant both in power and character, but, if in this way might was allowed to overcome right, who could possibly tell whose turn might be the next. Besides, it was important for Louis that the Duke of Mantua should also be kept in good humour, the delivery of Casale not having been effected; nor is it to be supposed that he would have consented to give it up to the French monarch within two years of this period, had he had a suspicion of the way his diplomatic agent and intended prime minister had been treated. The same reasons for concealment existed till the death of Matthioli, since that event happened while both Louis XIV. and the Duke of Mantua were still alive, which accounts for his confinement continuing to be always solitary and always secret.

The arrest of Matthioli certainly appears to have been the effect of a vindictive feeling against him in the breast of Louis himself; for it is impossible to imagine that any minister would have ventured, of his own free-will, upon a step by which so much was to be hazarded, and nothing, in fact, was to be gained. The act is only to be explained in this manner; that the monarch insisted upon his revenge, which the ministers were obliged to gratify; and, at the same time, in order to prevent any ill consequences

that might result from it, determined upon burying the whole transaction under the most inpenetrable veil of mystery.

The confinement of Matthioli is decidedly one of the deadliest stains that blot the character of Louis the Fourteenth; for, granting that Matthioli betrayed the trust reposed in him by that monarch, one single act of diplomatic treachery was surely not sufficient to warrant the infliction of the most horrible of all punishments,—of solitary confinement, for four and twenty years in a dungeon! It was, however, an act of cruel injustice that was to be expected from the man, who, when the unhappy Fouquet* was condemned by the tribunals of his country to exile, himself changed his sentence to that of perpetual imprisonment;—who, to please his mistress, confined his former favourite, Lauzun,† for nine years in the fortress of Pignerol, and only then released him in order, by that means, to swindle Mademoiselle de Montpensier‡ out of her fortune, in favour of his bastard, the Duke du Maine; —who shut up so many other persons, guilty only of imaginary crimes, in various prisons, where they died of

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* Nicholas Fouquet, "Surintendant des Finances," in 1653. The most lavish, but the most amiable of financiers. Disgraced in 1664, when he was condemned, by the commissioners appointed to inquire into his conduct, to banishment. The sentence was commuted by the King himself to perpetual imprisonment; and Fouquet died in the citadel of Pignerol, in 1680. On his trial he defended himself with great spirit and talent.

† Anthony Nompar de Caumont, Marquis of Peguilhem, and afterwards Duke of Lauzun: whose adventures and eccentricities are two well known to require relation here. It is in speaking of him that La Bruyère says, "Il n'est pas permis aux autres hommes de rêver, comme il a vecu."

‡ Anne Mary Louisa, of Orleans, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, commonly called the "Grande Mademoiselle." A woman of an unpleasant character, according to her own showing in her Memoirs; but who certainly did not deserve to be the victim, as she was, in different ways, of two such men as Louis and Lauzun.

misery and ill-treatment;—who revoked the Edict of Nantes;—ordered the burning of the Palatinate;—persecuted the saints of Port Royal;—and gloried in the Dragonnades, and the war of the Cevennes;—who, in short, whether we regard him as a man or a sovereign, was one of the most hardened, cruel, and tyrannical characters transmitted to us in history. Providence doubtless made use of him as a scourge befitting the crimes of the age he lived in; and, in this point of view, his existence was most useful. Nor is his memory less so; which has been left to us and to all posterity, as a mighty warning of the effects, even in this world, of overweening ambition; and as a melancholy example of the perversion of a proud heart, which "gave not God the glory," and was therefore abandoned by the Almighty to the effects of its own natural and irretrievable wickedness.

After the arrest of Matthioli, he underwent several interrogatories, in which, in spite of his numerous prevarications, his treachery was still more amply discovered. The examinations were all sent to Louvois by Catinat, who, as soon as they were concluded, left Pignerol, and returned to the court.

At first, Matthioli was, by the direction of Estrades, well treated in his prison; but this was not by any means the intention of Louis, and accordingly, we find Louvois writing thus to St. Mars. "It is not the intention of the King that the Sieur de Lestang should be *well-treated*; nor that, except the absolute necessaries of life, you should give him any thing that may make him pass his time agreeably." Again, in the same strain: "I have nothing to add to what I have already commanded you respecting the severity with which the individual named

Lestang must be treated." And again; "You must keep the individual named Lestang, in the severe confinement I enjoined in my preceding letters, without allowing him to see a physician, unless you know he is in absolute want of one." These repeated injunctions to the same effect are a proof, how much importance the rancorous Louis attached, to his victim's being compelled to drink the bitter cup of captivity to the very dregs.

The harshness and hopelessness of his prison, seems to have affected the intellects of Matthioli, for after he had been nearly a year confined, St. Mars acquaints Louvois, that "The Sieur de Lestang complains, he is not treated as a man of his quality, and the minister of a great prince ought to be; notwithstanding which, I continue to follow your commands most exactly upon this subject, as well as on all others. I think he is deranged by the way he talks to me, telling me he converses every day with God and his angels;—they have told him of the death of the Duke of Mantua and of the Duke of Lorrain;* and as an additional proof of his madness, he says, that he has the honour of being the near relation of the King, to whom he wishes to write, to complain of the way in which I treat him. I have not thought it right to give him paper

* Charles IV. or V., for he is sometimes called one and sometimes the other, was the son of Nicholas Francis, Cardinal, and afterwards Duke of Lorrain. On the death of his uncle, Charles IV., he took the barren titles of Duke of Lorrain and Bar, but never obtained possession of his territories, (which were usurped by France.) "though his military, political, and Christian virtues and talents, made him worthy to occupy the first throne in the universe." He commanded the armies of the Emperor for some years with the greatest distinction, married the Archduchess Eleanor, widow of Michael Wiecnowiecki, King of Poland, and died in 1690. Louis the Fourteenth, on hearing of his death, said of him, "that he was the greatest, wisest, and most generous of his enemies."

or ink for that purpose, perceiving him not to be in his right senses."

The unhappy prisoner, in his phrensy and despair, sometimes used very violent language to his keepers, and wrote abusive sentences with charcoal on the walls of his prison; on which account St. Mars ordered his lieutenant, Blainvilliers, to threaten him with punishment, and even to show him a cudgel, with which he was to be beaten, if he did not behave better.

These menaces so far intimidated Matthioli, that a few days afterwards, while Blainvilliers was serving him at dinner, he, in order to propitiate him, took a valuable ring from his finger and offered it to him. Blainvilliers told him he could accept nothing from a prisoner, but that he would deliver it to St. Mars; which he accordingly did. St. Mars estimates the ring at fifty or sixty pistoles; and M. Delort conjectures it to have been the one given to him by Louis the Fourteenth, during his stay at Paris. St. Mars inquires from Louvois what he is to do in consequence; and the latter returns for answer, that he "must keep the ring, which the Sieur Matthioli has given to the Sieur de Blainvilliers, in order to restore it to him, if it should ever happen that the King ordered him to be set at liberty."

Matthioli apparently expressed a wish to confess to a priest; and Louvois desires that he may be only allowed to do so once in the year. It appears that St. Mars had at this time in his custody a Jacobin monk, with whose crime, as well as name, we are unacquainted; but in the correspondence of St. Mars and Louvois, he is designated as "the Jacobin in the lower part of the tower." This man was mad; very possibly had been made so, like

Matthioli, by solitary confinement and ill-usage. St. Mars advised the putting Matthioli with him, in order to avoid the necessity of sending for a priest for each prisoner. To this proposal Louvois returned the following answer: "I have been made acquainted, by your letter of the 7th of this month (August 1680), with the proposal you make, to put the Sieur de Lestang with the Jacobin, in order to avoid the necessity of having two priests. The King approves of your project, and you have only to execute it when you please."

St. Mars, in a letter of the 7th of September, 1680, thus details the results of the execution of his plan:—

"Since you permitted me to put Matthioli with the Jacobin in the lower part of the tower, the aforesaid Matthioli was, for four or five days, in the belief that the Jacobin was a man that I had placed with him to watch his actions. Matthioli, who is almost as mad as the Jacobin, walked about with long strides, with his cloak over his nose, crying out that he was not a dupe, but that he knew more than he would say. The Jacobin, who was always seated on his truckle bed, with his elbows resting upon his knees, looked at him gravely, without listening to him. The Signior Matthioli remained always persuaded that it was a spy that had been placed with him, till he was one day disabused, by the Jacobin's getting down from his bed, stark naked, and setting himself to preach, without rhyme or reason, till he was tired. I and my lieutenants saw all their manœuvres through a hole over the door."

It appears to have been very entertaining to St. Mars and his lieutenants, to witness the ravings of these two unhappy maniacs; and there are probably many gaolers

who would experience the same feelings upon a similar occasion: what cannot, however, but strike us with horror, is the fact that there was found a minister, nay, a king, and that king one who piqued himself upon professing the Christian religion,* to sanction such a proceeding. It is indeed most painful to think, that power should have been placed in the hands of men, who could abuse it by such needless acts of cruelty.

We have no farther particulars of the state of Matthioli's mind; but, being more than half-mad at the time he was placed with the Jacobin, who was quite so, it is probable the company of the latter increased and perpetuated his phrensy. It is even not impossible that such may have been the intention of St. Mars, as, while Matthioli continued insane, it was of course more reasonable and plausible to continue the extraordinary rigour of his confinement.

Nor were mental sufferings the only ones which the barbarity of Louis and his minister obliged Matthioli to undergo. We have before seen, from the letters of Louvois to St. Mars, that the latter was desired generally to treat Matthioli with great severity; afterwards he writes to him upon the subject of his clothing, "You must make the clothes of such sort of people as he is last three or

* If we were to judge of the Christian religion by the manner in which it was professed by Louis the Fourteenth, we should indeed have a most perverted idea of its precepts. It seems as if the pseudo-christianity of that monarch, only incited him to acts of narrow-minded bigotry and cruelty, allowing, at the same time, full latitude to every kind of licentious excess; while it debarred him from the exercise of humanity and toleration. A good measure of the nature and extent of his religious knowledge and feelings is acquired, by the anecdote respecting Fontpertuis and the Duke of Orleans. When the latter was going into Spain, Louis objected to his taking the former with him, because he was a Jansenist; but withdrew the objection when assured by the duke that he was only an atheist!

four years."* Some idea may also be formed of the kind of furniture of his dungeon, from the circumstance, mentioned by S. Mars, that, upon the removal of his prisoner from the fort of Exiles to the Island of St Marguerite† in 1687, his bed had been sold, because it was so old and broken as not to be worth the carriage; and that all his furniture and linen being added to it, the sum produced by the sale was only thirteen crowns.‡

It may be worth remarking here that the letter of Louvois, respecting Matthioli's clothes, is a sufficient answer to the absurd stories with regard to the richness of the lace, &c. worn by the Iron Mask; and the relations from St. Mars himself of his threats to his prisoner, of even corporal punishment, no less disprove the erroneous accounts of the extraordinary respect shown to him.

In the year 1681, St. Mars was offered the government of the citadel of Pignerol, which he declined accepting, for what reasons we are not told: Louis, who was anxious to recompense his services as a gaoler ef State prisoners, then gave him the government of Exiles,§ a strong fortress and pass near Susa, on the frontier of Piedmont and the Briançonnois, which was vacant by the death of the Duke de Lesdiguières; at the same time augmenting the salary

* M. Roux (Fazillac), quoting from an unpublished letter of Louvois to St. Mars, dated December 14th, 1681.

† The Prison of Marshal Bazaine.—The island of St. Marguerite is one of the two Iles des Lérins opposite the picturesque little Mediterranean watering place of Cannes. The fortress was built by Louis XIII. in the early part of the 17th century under the auspices of Cardinal Richelieu, and has sustained two memorable sieges—one against the Spaniards in 1685, another in 1746 against the combined forces of the Austrians and Piedmontese. Marshal Bazaine was confined in this fortress, from whence he made his escape.

‡ About £1 12s. 0d.

§ Exiles was taken from the French in 1708, by the Duke of Savoy, but restored to them by the treaty of Utrecht.

attached to that situation, so as to make it equal to that of the towns in Flanders. Louvois, in a letter dated May 12th, 1681, acquaints St. Mars with his appointment; and informs him that "the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower" are the only ones of those under his care at Pignerol, whom the King wishes to accompany him to Exiles. "The two prisoners in the lower part of the tower," signify, as we have before seen, Matthioli and the monk.

An additional proof indeed, if any were wanted, that Matthioli was one of the two prisoners conveyed to Exiles, is given in the following extract from a letter of Louvois, dated June 9th, 1681:—"With regard to the effects belonging to the Sieur Matthioli which are in your possession, you will have them taken to Exiles, in order to be given back to him, if ever his Majesty should order him to be set at liberty."

It is to be remarked, that this is the last time Matthioli is mentioned by name in the correspondence between Louvois and St. Mars—in consequence, it appears, of what is said by the former in his letter before quoted of the 12th of May, where he desires a list of the names of all the prisoners then under the guard of St. Mars to be sent to him, and adds—"with regard to the two who are in the lower part of the tower, you need only designate them in that manner, without adding any thing else." This precaution was evidently enjoined lest the list should fall into other hands, while it also shows that the necessity for concealment was still considered as strong as ever.

This is also proved by the precautions ordered to be taken during the journey of the two prisoners, lest they should be seen or spoken to by any one; and by the re-

peated orders for their strict confinement.—"The intention of his Majesty is, that, as soon as the room at Exiles, which you shall judge the most proper for the secure keeping of the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower, shall be in a state to receive them, you should send them out of the citadel of Pignerol in a litter, and conduct them there under the escort of your troop." "His Majesty expects that you will guard the two before-mentioned prisoners, with the same exactitude you have made use of hitherto." To these instructions St. Mars returned an answer in the same strain, dated from Pignerol, as he was on the point of setting off for Exiles.—"In order that the prisoners may not be seen (at Exiles), they will not leave their chambers when they hear mass; and in order that they may be kept the more securely, one of my lieutenants will sleep above them, and there will be two sentinels night and day, who will watch the whole round of the tower, without its being possible for them and the prisoners to see and to speak to one another, or even to hear any thing of one another. They will be the soldiers of my company, who will be always the sentinels over the prisoners. There is only a confessor, about whom I have my doubts; but if you do not disapprove, I will give them the curate of Exiles instead, who is a good man, and very old; whom I will forbid, on the part of his Majesty, to inquire who these prisoners are, or their names, or what they have been, or to speak of them in any way, or to receive from them by word or mouth, or by writing, either communications or notes."

Before St. Mars removed finally to Exiles, he went there to inspect the fortress, leaving his prisoners under the guard of one of his lieutenants, which is here mentioned

to show the falseness of the idea that he never quitted his mysterious prisoner. Louvois enjoined him before he left them, to arrange the guarding of his prisoners in such a manner that no accident might happen to them during his short absence; and "that they might have no intercourse with any one, any more than they had had during the time they had been under his charge." Subsequently Louvois desired him not to be more than one night at a time absent from Pignerol.

St. Mars found certain repairs to be necessary to that part of the fortress of Exiles, which he deemed the most proper residence for "the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower." He demanded money for this purpose, and Louvois returned for answer that the King accorded him a thousand crowns, on condition he kept the grant a profound secret, and gave out that the repairs he was making were at his own expense. This again was evidently for the purpose of concealing from the neighbourhood, that any prisoners of importance were to be removed from Pignerol to Exiles.

The repairs of the tower at Exiles first delayed the removal of St. Mars, and afterwards he was ordered to stay some time longer at Pignerol, in order to receive Catinat, who was again sent there secretly, again under the assumed name of Richemont, and again for the purpose of taking possession of Casale. This time the King of France was more fortunate than he had been in 1679, as Casale was actually sold to him by the Duke of Mantua, in the autumn of this year, 1681.

Finally, it appears that St. Mars and his prisoners did not move to Exiles till late in the autumn of 1681. About this time, St. Mars apparently requested permission to see

and converse with Matthioli occasionally, for Louvois writes, "this word is only to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. The King does not disapprove of your visiting from time to time the last prisoner who has been placed in your charge, after he shall have been established in his new prison, and shall have left that where he is at present confined." It it rather curious to observe, from this document, that St. Mars was permitted to visit his prisoner at Exiles, but not while he continued at Pignerol.

The first communication of St. Mars to Louvois after his arrival at Exiles which has been published, is dated December the 4th, 1681, and relates to the sickness of his prisoners; and the next is a letter, dated March 11th, 1682, containing a similar detail to those already alluded to, of the precautions he took for the security and solitary confinement of his two prisoners. He begins by intimating that he has again received a charge from Louvois to that effect, and that he continues to guard his two prisoners as severely and exactly as he has ever done, and as he did formerly "Messrs. Fouquet and Lauzun, who could not boast that they had either sent or received any news while they were in confinement." He adds, that the two prisoners can hear the people who pass along the road at the foot of their prison, but that they cannot be heard by any one; that, in the same way, they can see the people who are on the hill opposite their windows, but cannot themselves be seen, on account of the bars placed across their room; that there are two sentinels always watching them, and who have also orders to prevent the passengers stopping under their windows—and that his own room, being joined to the tower, and commanding a view of the sentinels, the latter are by this means always kept alert.

That, in the inside of the tower, he has made a partition, which prevents the priest, who says mass, from seeing the prisoners, as well as the servants who bring their food—which is afterwards carried in to them by his lieutenant; who, together with himself, the confessor, and a physician from Pragelas, a town six leagues distant, are the only persons who speak to them; the physician only being allowed to do so in the presence of St. Mars himself. He adds, that equal precautions are taken with regard to their linen, and other necessaries.

From this period, we hear no more of St. Mars and his prisoners in the published documents, for above three years; his next communication to Louvois being dated Dec. 23rd, 1685; in which he informs him that his prisoners are still ill, and in a course of medicine. By the expression *still* being here used, it would seem as if their malady had been of considerable duration. He continues, "they are, however, perfectly tranquil." The mention of their present tranquillity is certainly an indication that their insanity had continued, at least at intervals.

Shortly after this, the Jacobin* died. Matthioli continued ill; and St. Mars, also finding his own health failing him, he became convinced that the air of Exiles was unwholesome; and petitioned in consequence for a change of government. Louis upon this appointed him, in 1687, to that of the Island of St. Marguerite and St. Honorat, on the coast of Provence, near Antibes, and ordered him, as before, to take Matthioli with him.

As in the case of his removal to Exiles, so, upon the present occasion, St. Mars went first to look at and prepare the prison at St. Marguerite, before he conveyed his pri-

* Roux (Fazillac).

soner there. Previously, however, to leaving him for that purpose, he writes to Louvois, to assure him once more of the secrecy and security with which he is confined—"I have given such good orders for the guarding of my prisoner, that I can answer for his entire security; as well as for his not now, nor ever, holding any intercouse with my Lieutenant, whom I have forbidden to speak to him, which is punctually obeyed."

He afterwards writes again to the same Minister, from the Island of St. Marguerite, "I promise to conduct my prisoner here in all security, without any one's seeing or speaking to him. He shall not hear mass after he leaves Exiles, till he is lodged in the prison which is preparing for him here, to which a chapel is attached. I pledge my honour to you for the entire security of my prisoner."

St. Mars accordingly returned for Matthioli, and conveyed him to his new abode, in the manner he had proposed doing, in his letter to Louvois, of January 20th, 1687—"In a chair, covered with oil-cloth, into which there would enter a sufficiency of air, without its being possible for any one to see or speak to him during the journey, not even the soldiers, whom I shall select to be near the chair."

In spite of the expectations of St Mars that, in this mode of conveyance, his prisoner would have air enough, it appears that he complained of the want of it, and soon fell ill in consequence. This is mentioned in a letter of St. Mars, dated May 3rd, 1687, giving an account of their arrival at the Island of St. Marguerite, and is the last of the correspondence between Louvois and St. Mars respecting Matthioli: "I arrived here the 30th of last month. it was only twelve days on the journey, in consequence of the illness of my prisoner, occasioned, as he said, by not

having as much air as he wished. I can assure you that no one has seen him, and that the manner in which I have guarded and conducted him during all the journey, makes every body try to conjecture who my prisoner is."

It was probably, during this journey, that St. Mars first made use of a mask to hide the features of Matthioli.* Not as has been erroneously supposed a mask made of iron, which it will be evident, upon the slightest reflection, could not have been borne upon the face for any long continuance of time, but one of black velvet,† strengthened with whalebone, and fastened behind the head with a padlock, which did not prevent the prisoner from eating and drinking, or impede his respiration.‡

The identity of Matthioli with the prisoner known by the name of "the Iron Mask," is here very satisfactorily confirmed by circumstantial evidence. We have seen that Matthioli and the Jacobin were placed together at Pignerol; we have seen that they were designated as "the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower;" we have seen that "the two prisoners in the lower part of the tower" were the only ones who accompanied St. Mars when his government was transferred to Exiles; we have seen the death of the Jacobin at the latter place; and now we find St. Mars conveying a single prisoner, designated as "*the prisoner*," with him to St. Marguerite, with repetition of the same precautions and of the same secrecy as on former occasions, to which are added the celebrated Mask. Who could this prisoner be but Matthioli? It is

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* Delort.

† Extract of Dujonca's journal, in Mr. Craufurd's article upon "L Homme au Masque de fer."

‡ Delort.

also observable, that in all the various accounts of the Iron Mask, though the dates are made to vary, he is always said to have been originally confined at Pignerol, subsequently at the Island of St. Marguerite, and finally to have accompanied St. Mars to the Bastile.

The prison of Matthioli, at the Island of St. Marguerite, was a room lighted by a single window to the north, pierced in a very thick wall, guarded by bars of iron, and looking upon the sea.* During his residence in this place, his valet, who, as may be remembered, had been arrested by Estrades, and who had served his master ever since his confinement, died, and was buried at midnight, and with great secrecy. To supply his place, a woman of the neighbourhood was asked if she would undertake to wait upon the prisoner. At first she consented to accept of the place, imagining it might be a means of benefiting her family; but afterwards declined it, upon learning that she was to be cut off from all further intercourse with the world, and never even to see her family again† Whether any one was eventually found to undertake the office, does not appear.

Among the erroneous anecdotes that have obtained credence with regard to the Iron Mask, there are two, or rather apparently two versions of one event, which is said to have taken place while he was at the Island of St. Marguerite, but which is proved to be incorrect, by a letter published by M. Roux (Fazillac).

One version of the story states, that the mysterious prisoner wrote his name and qualities with the point of a

* Papon in his "Histoire générale de Provence" informs us that he went to see the room.

† "Histoire générale de Provence, du Père Papon."

knife upon a silver plate, and threw it out of his window; that it was picked up by a fisherman, who could not read, but brought it to St. Mars; and that the latter, having ascertained that the man could not read, released him.* The other version is, that the prisoner covered one of his shirts with writing, and then threw it out of window; a Monk found it, brought it to the Governor, and assured him he had not read it; but was himself found dead in his bed two days afterwards, and was supposed to have been assassinated.† The origin of these stories, is evidently to be found in a letter from St. Mars to the Minister,‡ dated June 4th, 1692; in which he informs him that he has been obliged to inflict corporal punishment upon a Protestant minister, named Salves, who was a prisoner under his care, because *he would write things upon his pewter vessels, and on his linen, in order to make known that he was imprisoned unjustly, on account of the purity of his faith.* Thus we see that this anecdote, which has been twisted into the history of the Iron Mask, had, in fact, no relation to him. And this circumstance should put us on our guard with respect to the many other marvellous stories, which have probably been pressed in the same way into the service. It is also worthy of remark that the public having determined that the Iron Mask was a great Prince, every thing was related in a manner to favour this opinion—and thus the pewter of the obscure Salves was turned, in the anecdote, into silver plate.

* See "Mélanges d'Histoire et de Littérature," by Mr. Quintin Craufurd.

† See the same work of Mr. Quintin Craufurd.

‡ This must have been Louis Francis Le Tellier, Marquis de Barbezieux, who, in the preceding year, had succeeded his father, Louvois, in the post of Secretary of State for the War Department. He was an indolent but intelligent Minister.—Died in 1701, aged 33.

After eleven years' tedious confinement at the Island of St. Marguerite, Matthioli accompanied St. Mars to the Bastile, to the government of which the latter was appointed, upon the death of M. de Bezemaux, which occurred in the last days of 1697.*

Before his departure from St. Marguerite, St. Mars wrote to the Minister to request that secure lodgings might be provided for him and his prisoner during the journey; to which he received for answer, "It will be sufficient that you should lodge as conveniently and securely as you can, by means of payment."†

St. Mars accordingly set forth on his journey to the Bastile, early in the autumn of 1698, and in the course of it lodged at his own estate of Palteau, which he probably considered a securer resting place for his prisoner than any inn could have been. An account of his visit to Palteau has been given by one of his descendants, of whose accuracy no reasonable doubt can be entertained.

It is there stated, that the masked prisoner arrived at Palteau in a litter, which preceded the one in which St. Mars himself travelled. They were accompanied by many men on horseback, and by the peasants who had gone to meet their landlord. St. Mars always ate with his prisoner, and the latter sat with his back to the windows of the dining-room, so that the peasants who were in the court could not see whether he kept his mask on while at meals; but they observed that St. Mars, who sat opposite

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* Delort.

† Delort, quoting from an unpublished letter (probably from Barbezieux), dated August 4th, 1698.—It may be as well to mention here that M. Delort frequently quotes portions of letters from the French Archives, but does not publish them in his appendix. When in the course of this narrative the name of M. Delort is given as an authority, it is, for the most part, under these circumstances.

to him, had two pistols placed by the side of his plate. They were served by a single servant, who brought all the dishes from the ante-room, where they were placed, and always when he came in or went out shut the door very carefully after him. When the prisoner crossed the court, he always had his black mask over his face. The peasants also observed, that his teeth and lips were seen, that he was tall of stature, and had grey hair. St. Mars slept in a bed which had been put up close to that of his prisoner.*

St. Mars and Matthioli arrived at the Bastile on the 18th of September, 1698, and the former immediately went to the Minister to apprize him of their arrival.† This event is thus commemorated in the journal of M. Dujonca,‡ who was for many years the Lieutenant of the King, at the Bastile:—"Thursday, 18th September, 1698, at three o'clock in the afternoon, M. de St. Mars, Governor of the Bastile, arrived to take possession of his office, coming from the Islands of St. Marguerite and St. Honorat, bringing with him in his litter an old prisoner, whom he had under his care at Pignerol, of whom the name is not mentioned; who is always kept masked, and who was first placed, till

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* Such is the account given by M. de Palteau, the direct descendant of St. Mars, in a letter to Freron, dated Palteau, June 19th, 1768. It was published in the "Année Littéraire" for that year, and has since been republished by Mr. Craufurd, in his paper on the Iron Mask.

† Delort.

‡ The place of "Lieutenant de Roi," at the Bastile, was created by Louis the Fourteenth, for M. Dujonca, who had been "Exempt" of one of the regiments of the King's Body-guards. He acquires great credit by his endeavours to procure he release of the prisoners under his care, whom, upon inquiry, he found to be unjustly detained. Some one represented to him that he would deprive himself of a great portion of his profits by thus diminishing the number of prisoners—to which he replied, "*I can only lose my money, but these unhappy people are deprived of what is more valuable to them than even life itself.*"

night, in the tower of the Basiniere,* and whom I conducted afterwards myself, at nine o'clock at night, to the third chamber of the tower of the Bertaudiere;* which chamber I had taken care to furnish with all things necessary before his arrival, having received orders to that effect from M. de St. Mars. When I conducted him to the before-mentioned chamber, I was accompanied by the Sieur Rosarges,† whom M. de St. Mars also brought with him, and who is charged to wait upon and take care of the aforesaid prisoner, who is fed by the Governor."‡

Dujonca's account is confirmed by the extracts of the Register of the Bastile, published in the work entitled "La Bastile dévoilée."§

The placing of the prisoner, on his first arrival, temporarily in one part of the Bastile, and afterwards removing him by night to another, appears to have been done for the sake of greater secrecy; and we see by this, as well as by the account of his visit to Palteau, that the precautions against the possibility of discovery of his name and character were in no way diminished.

He certainly continued, from all accounts, to wear his mask from the time of his arrival at the Bastile till his death. We learn from the persons who saw him at Palteau that he was tall of stature; and an old physician,

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* These towers are supposed to have been so called from the names of the architects who built them.

† Rosarges was made Major of the Bastile by St. Mars.

‡ Extract from the Journal of Dujonca, first published by Griffet, then by St. Foix, and subsequently by Mr. Craufurd.

§ Names and qualities of the Prisoners.—An old prisoner from Pignerol, obliged always to wear a mask of black velvet, whose name and quality have never been known. Dates of their Entries.—Sept 18th, 1698. At three o'clock in the afternoon. Reference to the Journal.—Dujonca, Volume 37. Reasons for their detention.—It was never known.

who had attended him at the Bastile when he was ill, described him (if we may credit Voltaire) as well made, of a brown complexion, and possessing an agreeable voice. He attended mass occasionally, and was forbid in his way there to speak to any one. The invalids were ordered to fire upon him if he disobeyed.* He is also said to have occupied himself a good deal during his confinement with playing on the guitar.†

These are all the particulars, worthy of credit, to be collected respecting Matthioli during his confinement at the Bastile, which lasted rather more than five years. He died there after a few hours' illness, November 19th, 1703, Dujonca's journal gives the following account of his decease and interment.

"Monday, 19th November, 1703. The unknown prisoner, who was always masked with a mask of black velvet, whom M. de St. Mars brought with him when he came from the Island of St. Marguerite, and whom he had had the care of for a long time, having found himself rather more unwell when he came out from mass, died today, about ten o'clock in the evening, without having had any considerable illness. M. Girault, our chaplain, confessed him yesterday. Death having come suddenly on, he was not able to receive his sacraments, and our chaplain only had time to exhort him for a moment before he died. He was interred on Tuesday the 20th November, at four in the afternoon, in the churchyard of St. Paul, which is our parish. His interment cost forty livres."

This extract is confirmed in its facts by the register of the Bastile, as well as by the register of burials of the

* Mr. Craufurd, on the authority of Linguet.

† Delort and Craufurd.

church of St. Paul, at Paris. The former document also informs us that he was wrapped in "a winding sheet of new linen,"—and the latter, that he was buried in the presence of Rosarges, Major of the Bastile, and of Reilh, Surgeon-Major of the same prison.

In the register of the church he is designated by the name of Marchialy, and his age is entered as forty-five; assertions which are both of them evidently incorrect, and probably only made in order to mislead the curious. At the time of his death, Matthioli was sixty-three years of age, as appears from the date of his birth before given. Shortly before he died, he told the Apothecary of the Bastile that he believed he was sixty years* old—a degree of inaccuracy as to his own age, which is easily to be conceived in a man who had been so long and so rigorously imprisoned. His confinement had lasted above twenty-four years.

After the decease of Matthioli, every thing was done to endeavour to destroy all trace even of his former existence. His clothes were burnt, as was all the furniture of his room; the silver plate, the copper, and the pewter, which had been used by him, were melted down; the walls of his chamber were first scraped, and then fresh white-washed; the floor was new paved; the old ceiling was taken away and renewed; the doors and windows were burnt; and every corner was searched in which it was thought any paper, linen, or other memorial of him might be concealed.

Thus were continued, to the very last, the same extraordinary precautions against discovery, which marked the

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* Delort.

whole imprisonment of the mysterious prisoner; a circumstance, which of itself certainly affords a strong confirmation of the fact, that the *Iron Mask of the Bastile*, was one and the same person with the *Count Matthioli*, who had been so secretly introduced into Pignerol, and so mysteriously conveyed from place to place by St. Mars. But the actual proof of this is only to be found in the documents which form the groundwork of the preceding narrative; and which, undoubtedly, do present a most convincing and satisfactory chain of evidence upon the subject.

An important corroboration of this evidence is also derived from the well-attested fact, that Louis the Fifteenth, who is allowed, on all hands, to have known the history of the Iron Mask, affirmed, more than once, that *he was the minister of an Italian sovereign.* He told the Duke de Choiseul,* on one occasion, that he knew who the Iron Mask was; and, upon the Duke's questioning him further, would only add, *that all the conjectures hitherto made upon the subject were erroneous.*† The Duke then

* Stephen Francis, Duke de Choiseul, Prime Minister under Louis the Fifteenth, for above twelve years. A man of some talent, but an unskilful and extravagant minister; in spite of which, on his disgrace, (through the means of Madame du Barri, in 1770) he was turned into a martyr, by the influence of the ladies of the court, who were angry with the King for choosing his mistresses from the lower orders, instead of among them. To do him honour snuff-boxes were made, bearing the head of Sully on one side, and that of the Duke de Choiseul on the other. One of them being shown to *Sophie Arnoud*, the actress, celebrated for her repartees, she looked at the two sides, and said, "*C'est la recette—et la dépense.*"

† This first answer of the king ought not to be entirely overlooked; as, it will be remembered that, at the time it was made, the minister of the Duke of Mantua had not been mentioned by any one as the Iron Mask. He was first suggested to have been that prisoner, by the Baron de Heiss, in a letter to the authors of the "Journal Encyclopédique," dated Phalsbourg, June 28th, 1770; in which he grounded his opinion upon a letter, published in a work entitled "L'Histoire Abregée de l'Europe;" published at Leyden in 1687; giving a detailed account of the arrest, by French agents, of a secretary of the Duke of Mantua.

begged Madame de Pompadour* to ask the King who it was; she did so, and his reply was, "*The minister of an Italian prince!*" The Duke de Choiseul, unsatisfied by this reply, which he considered to be only an evasion, took another opportunity of again applying to the King upon the subject, who again answered, *He believed that the prisoner was a minister of one of the courts of Italy!*" †

Thus has the ill-fated Matthioli been identified with the Iron Mask, and traced through his long and dreary prison to his grave. It is probable that much of the illusion and interest which accompanied the mysterious appellation of *the Iron Mask*, will be destroyed by the certainty of who he really was; as well as by the comparative insignificance of the personage who has successfully laid claim to the title. Still it is surely satisfactory that truth, after being so long overwhelmed by error, should be at length triumphant.

FINIS.

M. Dutens, in his "Correspondance Interceptée," published in 1789, held the same opinion, grounded upon the same authority. He afterwards repeated the same opinion in his "Mémoires d'un Voyageur, qui se repose." Finally, M. Roux, (Fazillac) in 1801, published his work upon the Iron Mask; in which he supported the same opinion; and attached to the Secretary the name of Matthioli.

* Jane Antoinette Poisson, married to a financier named Le Normand d'Etioles; created Marquis de Pompadour by Louis the Fifteenth, of whom she was first the mistress, and afterwards the minister of his disgraceful debauches. At her death, in 1765, the King showed no signs of grief; and on seeing her funeral go by his windows on a rainy day, his only remark was, "La Marquise aura aujourdhui un mauvais temps pour son voyage!"

† Madame Campan mentions having heard Louis the Sixteenth tell his wife, that the Count de Maurepas (who, both from his age and situation, was very likely to know the truth,) had informed him that the *Iron Mask* was "a prisoner dangerous from his intriguing disposition, and a subject of the Duke of Mantua."

McCorquodale and Co., Printers, London,
Works, Newton.